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TRAGEDY
OF
TAMERLANE.

BY N. ROWE, ESQ.

ADAPTED FOR THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,

As performed at the
THEATRE-ROYAL, COVENT-GARDEN.

Regulated from the Prompt Books,

By Permission of the Managers.

WITH A CRITIQUE,

By R. CUMBERLAND, Esq.

The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas are omitted in
the Representation; and those printed in Italics
have been altered from the Original.

Cooke's Edition.



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United Kingdom.



TO THE RIGHT MONOURABLE
WILLIAM,
LORD MARQUIS OF HARTINGTON.

(Afterwards Duke of Devonshire.)

MY LORD,

EVERY one is now so full of business, that productions of this kind, which are generally resorted to for the entertainment of leisure hours only, look like impertinence and interruption. For this reason I ought to beg your Lordship's pardon, for troubling you with this tragedy; not but that poetry has always been, and will still be, the entertainment of all wise men: yet, at so critical a juncture as this is, I must confess, I think your Lordship ought to direct your attention entirely to those public affairs, which, at this time, seem to demand you. It is that happy turn which your Lordship has to business; that right understanding of your country's interest, and that constant zeal to pursue it; that just thinking; that strong and persuasive elocution; that firm and generous resolution, which, upon all occasions, you have shewn in parliament; and (to add that which is the crowning good quality) your Lordship's continual adherence, and unshaken loyalty, to his present Majesty, which make you at this time so necessary to the public. I must confess (though there is no part in your Lordship's character but what the world should be fond of) I cannot help distinguishing the last instance very particularly. It is doing such a justice to goodness, to greatness, and to right reason, that posterity will believe there could be no man of good sense, but what must have agreed with your Lordship in it. When the next age shall read the history of this, what excuse can they make for those who did not admire a prince, whose life has been a series of good offices to mankind? When they shall reckon up his labours, from the battle of Seneff, to some glorious action, which shall be his last, (and which, I hope, is very far remov'd from the present time) will they ever believe that he could have been too well loved, or too faithfully served and defended?

The great things which he did before we had that immediate interest in him, which we now happily have, is a noble and just subject for panegyric ; but as benefits to others can never touch us so sensibly as those we receive ourselves, though the actions may be equally great ; I can hardly have patience to refer back to his having saved his own country, when I consider he has since done the same for us. What dangers and difficulties has he not struggled through, for the honour and safety of these kingdoms ? He has continually exposed his life for his people. But there are some things more particular in his character, rarely found amongst the policies of princes ; a zeal for religion, moderated by reason, without the rage and fire of persecution ; a charitable compassion for those who cannot be convinced ; and an unalterable perseverance in those principles, of whose truth he is satisfied ; a pious care for allaying factions, though to foment them might make him arbitrary ; and a generous ambition, that only aims at power, to enable him to do good to all the world. I might add here, that inviolable and religious observance of his royal word, which the powers of Europe have so frequently, and so happily for themselves, depended upon in the greatest emergencies ; but as this virtue is no more than that common honesty, which the meanest man should blush to be without, it can hardly claim a place amongst the more particular excellencies of a great prince. It were to be wished, indeed, that the world were honest to such a degree, and that there were not that scandalous defect of common morality. Certainly, nothing can be more shocking to humanity, to the peace and order of the world, nothing can approach nearer to the savage state of nature, than an avowed liberty of breaking through all the most solemn engagements of public faith. It brands a man with an infamy, which nothing can extenuate, or wipe out ; he may protest, and pretend to explain his meaning, but the world has generally too much indignation for the affront to bear it with patience.

DEDICATION.

▼

Some people (who do me a very great honour in it) have fancied, that in the person of Tamerlane, I have alluded to the greatest character of the present age. I don't know whether I ought not to apprehend a great deal of danger from avowing a design like that. It may be a task, indeed, worthy the greatest genius, which this, or any other time, has produced; but therefore I ought not to stand the shock of a parallel, lest it should be seen, to my disadvantage, how far the hero has transcended the poet's thought. There are many features, 'tis true, in that great man's life, not unlike his majesty; his courage, his piety, his moderation, his justice, and his fatherly love of his people; but above all, his hate of tyranny and oppression, and his zealous care for the common good of mankind, carry a strong resemblance of him. Several incidents are alike in their stories; and there wants nothing to his majesty, but such a deciding victory, as that by which Tamerlane gave peace to the world: that is yet to come; but I hope we may reasonably expect it, from the unanimity of the present parliament, and the formidable force which that unanimity will give life and vigour to.

If your Lordship can find any thing in this poem, like a prince who is so justly the object of your Lordship's, and indeed of the world's veneration, I persuade myself it will prevail with you to forgive every thing else that you find wrong. You will excuse the faults in writing, for the goodness of the intention. I hope, too, your Lordship will not be displeased, that I take this opportunity of renewing the honour which I formerly had to be known to your Lordship, and which gives me, at once, the pleasure of expressing those just and dutiful sentiments I have for his majesty, and that strong inclination which I have always had, to be thought,

My Lord,
Your Lordship's most obedient
humble servant,

N. ROWE

CRITIQUE

ON

TAMERLANE.

OF the right to criticize a literary work no doubt can be entertained. Once published, it becomes public property. Every man who buys it, has an undoubted title to deliver his opinion upon its merits; but these, like all other opinions, if delivered publicly, should be sincere; partiality should not flatter, prejudice should not condemn. Least of all should either of these motives influence the critic, when he undertakes to decide on the productions of departed genius. When the heart that felt, the head that conceived, the hand that wrote, are mouldered in the dust; when the talents and the wit, which " 'witch'd the world," or " set the table on a roar," are for ever vanished, " leaving no wreck behind," saye the few pages on which we sit in judgment, it is cruelty, it is cowardice in the extreme, to insult their ashes, and wantonly to rob their spirits of that due portion of fame, to obtain which they triumm'd the midnight lamp, and of which the generous hope, mingling with their last earthly prayer, alleviated their last agonizing pang.

With these truths in our recollection, let us proceed to a consideration of the tragedy of *Tamerlane*, which, though perhaps not so generally popular as Mr. Rowe's other plays, the *Fair Penitent* and *Jane Shore*, is surely a work of great merit, and sufficient of itself to place him high in the ranks of English dramatists.

It evidently appears, from the works which he has left behind him, that Mr. Rowe amply possessed the great requisites for writing well:—genius, acquired learning, and a taste formed on the model of the ancients. In imitation of them, he appears to have preferred the historical species of fable; that is, he took a particular event, which had really happened,

as the basis of his poem; modifying it, and embellishing it by subordinate incidents, so as to give it the appearance of one perfect whole, alternately terrible or pathetic; and, in respect to manners, sentiment, and diction, affording a just representation of characters already in some degree familiar to his audience. It is not our present object to enquire, whether this species of fable, or that which the poet himself invents, is to be preferred; there are great authorities in favour of both: but Mr. Rowe's method leaves us more at liberty to proceed at once to a farther investigation; and, if we see nothing unnatural or incongruous in his chain of incidents, to enquire how he has conducted himself with regard to other poetical requisites.

Without farther discussion, therefore, it may be sufficient to say, that Mr. Rowe has managed his fable, so as to render it both probable and interesting. The fate of two great empires is decided: virtue is triumphant, and vice is punished. The incidents are natural and unforced: the episodes, or under-plots, are skilfully and happily interwoven with the main story, so as to add to its interest, and to bring forward the principal persons of the drama in new and luminous points of view.

If this opinion be just, as every one who attentively considers it will probably admit, Mr. Rowe has gone a great length towards the attainment of dramatic perfection; and we shall only have to inquire how he has succeeded in the remaining points, of manners, sentiments, and diction.

No one, who has read the history of Bajazet, can doubt that the poet had a right to depict him as a sanguinary tyrant, who spurned at all laws, human and divine, as regarding all mankind as his slaves, and as being influenced by no other considerations than those of pride, passion, and ambition. If he were such by nature, it is evident that all these feelings must have been sublimed and inflamed almost to madness by the sudden reverse of his fortune. To

delineate a character of this description, to enter into and personify the agonies of such a mind, torn by such conflicting passions, and 'at the same time to avoid the almost inevitable danger of falling into extravagance and bombast, was surely no easy task. But this Mr. Rowe has successfully accomplished. He has done more: he remembered that this monster was a man; that, mingled with his fury, his disdain, and his despair, there were some softer emotions, some human feelings, whose still voice was sometimes heard amid the tempest of his rage, but which, instead of calming it, added new fuel to the flame. These nice touches of nature, which nothing but the hand of a master could have supplied, are most happily introduced in this drama. What can be more natural, or more beautiful, than the effect produced on Bajazet by the unexpected appearance of his daughter? He is in one of his wildest paroxysms of fury; but, on beholding her, he suddenly drops into tenderness, and exclaims,

" Now, by our prophet, if my wounded mind
 " Could know a thought of peace, it would be now:
 " Ev'n from thy prating infancy thou wert
 " My joy, my little angel: smiling comfort
 " Came with thee, still to glad me."

Then instantly recollection comes across, and he breaks out—

" ————— Now I'm curst
 " Ev'n in thee too. Reproach and infamy
 " Attend the Christian dog t' whom thou wert
 " trusted!

" To see thee here—'twere better see thee dead!"
 Nothing can go beyond this. The image of his conqueror seems to haunt him. Every other idea is either absorbed by it, or so tinged with it as hardly to be separated. When Axalla sues for his daughter's hand, he breaks out into indignant invective, such as might be expected from wounded pride; but instantly his dominant principle recurs, and he exclaims,

" ———— I tell thee, Christian,

“ There is but one, one dowry thou canst give,
 “ And I can ask, worthy my daughter's love:
 “ Bring me the Tartar's head!”

Similar passages, equally excellent, pervade this character, particularly in the fifth act, when he is about to kill this favourite daughter. But it is enough to have pointed them out. They are to be found in every page.

The character of Tamerlane, being of a milder complexion, and more within general experience, was of course more easily drawn. But probably no one would have drawn it so well as Mr. Rowe has done. Dignity, spirit, mildness, resolution, valour, and piety, are blended in him with a very superior degree skill, each tempering the other so exquisitely, that, take any speech of his you will, they burst on you with concentrated force, commanding involuntary veneration and love, enhanc'd undoubtedly by contrast, but powerful enough of themselves to produce the most forcible effect. To instance from only one scene, that of his conference with the Dervise: when the Dervise reprobates his regard for the Christian Axalla, as contrary to their law, he replies,

“ 'Tis false; no law divine condemns the virtuous,
 “ For diff'ring from the rules your schools devise.
 “ Look round, how Providence bestows alike
 “ Sunshine and rain, to bless the fruitful year,
 “ On diff'rent nations, all of diff'rent faiths.
 “ Heav'n takes the various tribute of their praise,”
 &c.

When the Dervise asserts his having been commissioned by the Prophet, to urge an union between Tamerlane and Bajazet, for the purpose of exterminating the Christians, how energetic is his exclamation:—

“ ——— No! thou dost belie him,
 “ Thou maker of new faiths! that dar'st to build
 “ Thy fond inventions on religion's name.
 “ Religion's lustre is, by native innocence,
 “ Divinely pure, and simple from all arts:

“ You daub and dress her like a common mistress,
 “ The harlot of your fancies ; and, by adding
 “ False beauties, which she wants not, make the
 “ world

“ Suspect her angel's face is foul beneath,

“ And wo' not bear all lights.”——

Again, when he disarms the Dervise, who had attempted to assassinate him :—

“ Now learn the difference 'twixt thy faith and
 “ mine :

“ Thine bids thee lift the dagger to my throat ;

“ Mine can forgive the wrong, and bid thee live.

“ Keep thy own wicked secret, and be safe !

“ If thou repent'st, I have gain'd one to virtue,

“ And am, in that, rewarded for my mercy ;

“ If thou continu'st still to be the same,

“ 'Tis punishment enough to be a villain !”

Let inferior poets paint heroism as bombast and madness. Mr. Rowe gives his hero sentiment, and a heart warmed with noble feelings. When these requisites are attained, the expression follows of course ; and the more simple and unaffected that is, the nearer it comes to nature, and the more strongly do we confess its truth.

Of the inferior characters of this drama it may be sufficient to say, that they are chastely drawn and happily discriminated. The diction is always elegant ; in many places approaching the sublime ; in all, beautifully cadenced and appropriate. To expect any work from a mortal hand to be void of errors, is to look for that which has never yet appeared. There certainly are passages in this tragedy susceptible of improvement, and others which perhaps might have been more fortunately contrived and conducted. But in every garden, however rich in its nature, or however carefully cultivated, weeds will intermingle with the fairest flowers ; and where, as in this, the flowers so greatly predominate, I should blush to stoop to select the others, or to point them out to notice, when admiration and praise are so justly due to our entertainer.

B.

PROLOGUE.

*OF all the muse's various labours none
Have lasted longer or have higher flown,
Than those that tell the fame by ancient heroes won.
With pleasure, Rome and great Augustus heard
'Arms and the man' sung by the Mantuan bard.
In spite of time the sacred story lives,
And Cæsar and his empire still survives.
Like him (tho' much unequal to his flame)
Our author makes a pious prince his theme.
High with the foremost names, in arms he stood,
Had fought, and suffer'd for his country's good,
Yet sought not fame, but peace, in fields of blood.
Safe under him his happy people sat,
And griev'd, at distance, for their neighbours' fate;
Whilst with success a Turkish monarch crown'd,
Like spreading flame, deformed the nations round;
With sword and fire he forc'd his impious way
To lawless pow'r and universal sway.
Some abject states, for fear, the tyrant join,
Others for gold their liberties resign,
And venal princes sold their right divine:
Till Heav'n, the growing evil to redress,
Sent Tamerlane to give the world a peace.
The hero rous'd, asserts the glorious cause,
And to the field the cheerful soldier draws.
Around, in crowds, his valiant leaders wait,
Anxious for glory and secure of fate;
Well pleas'd, once more, to venture on his side,
And prove that faith again, which had so oft been try'd.
The peaceful fathers, who in senates meet,
Approve an enterprise so just, and great;
While with their prince's arms, their voice thus join'd,
Gains half the praise of having sav'd mankind.
Ev'n in a circle, where, like this, the fair
Were met, the bright assembly did declare,
Their house, with one consent, were for the war;*

*Each urg'd her lover to unsheath his sword,
And never spare a man who broke his word.
Thus fir'd, the brave on to the danger press;
Their arms were crown'd abroad with just success,
And blest at home with beauty and with peace.*



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Men.

TAMERLANE.

BAJAZET.

AXALLA.

MONESES.

STRATOCLES.

Prince of TANAI.

OMAR.

MIRVAN.

ZAMA.

HALY.

Dervise.

Women.

ARPASIA.

SELIMA.

Parthian and Tartarian Soldiers.

Mutes belonging to Bajazet.

Other Attendants.

SCENE, *Tamerlane's Camp, near
Angoria in Galatia.*

TAMERLANE.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Before TAMERLANE's Tent. Enter the Prince of TANAIS, ZAMA, and MIRVAN.

Prince of Tanais. HAIL to the sun! from whose returning light

The cheerful soldier's arms new lustre take,
To deck the pomp of battle. O, my friends!
Was ever such a glorious face of war?
See, from this height, how all Galatia's plains
With nations numberless are cover'd o'er;
Who, like a deluge, hide the face of earth,
And leave no object in the vast horizon,
But glitt'ring arms, and skies.

Zam. Our Asian world,
From this important day expects a lord;
This day they hope an end of all their woes,
Of tyranny, of bondage, and oppression,
From our victorious emp'ror, Tamerlane.

" *Mir.* Well has our holy Alha mark'd him out
" The scourge of lawless pride and dire ambition,
" The great avenger of the groaning world.
" Well has he worn the sacred cause of justice
" Upon his prosp'rous sword. Approving Heav'n
" Still crown'd the righteous warrior with success;
" As if it said, Go forth, and be my champion,
" Thou, most like me of all my works below.

" *Pr.* No lust of rule, the common vice of kings,
" No furious zeal, inspir'd by hot-brain'd priests,
" Ill hid beneath religion's specious name,
" E'er drew his temp'rate courage to the field:
" But to redress an'injur'd people's wrongs,
" To save the weak one from the strong oppressor,
" Is all his end of war. And when he draws
" The sword to punish, like relenting Heav'n,
" He seems unwilling to deface his kind.

" *Mir.* So rich his soul in ev'ry virtuous grace,

" That, had not Nature made him great by birth,
 " Yet all the brave had sought him for their friend.
 " The Christian prince, Axalla, nicely bred
 " In polish'd arts of European courts,
 " For him forsakes his native Italy,
 " And lives a happy exile in his service.

" *Pr.* Pleas'd with the gentle manners of that
 " Prince,

" Our mighty lord is lavish to his friendship;
 " Tho' Omar and the Tartar lords repine,
 " And loudly tax their monarch as too partial.

" *Zam.* Ere the mid-hour of night, from tent to
 " tent,

" Unweary'd, thro' the num'rous host he past,
 " Viewing with careful eyes each several quarter;
 " Whilst from his looks, as from divinity,
 " The soldiers took presage, and cry'd, Lead on,
 " Great Alha, and our Emperor, lead on,
 " To victory, and everlasting fame."

Mir. Hear you of Bajazet?

Pr. Late in the evening,

A slave of near attendance on his person
 'Scap'd to our camp. From him we learn'd, the ty-
 rant,

With rage redoubled, for the fight prepares;
 Some accidental passion fires his breast,
 (Love, as 'tis thought, for a fair Grecian captive)
 And adds new horror to his native fury.

" For five returning suns, scarce was he seen
 " By any, the most favour'd of his court,
 " But in lascivious ease, among his women,
 " Liv'd from the war retir'd; or else alone,
 " In sullen mood, sat meditating plagues
 " And ruin to the world; 'till yester morn,
 " Like fire that lab'ring upwards rends the earth,
 " He burst with fury from his tent, commanding
 " All should be ready for the fight this day.

" *Zam.* I know his temper well, since in his court,
 " Companion of the brave Axalla's embassy,
 " I oft observ'd him proud, impatient.

" Of aught superior, e'en of Heav'n that made him;
 " Fond of false glory, of the savage pow'r
 " Of ruling without reason, of confounding
 " Just and unjust, by an unbounded will;
 " By whom religion, honour, all the bands
 " That ought to hold the jarring world in peace,
 " Were held the tricks of state, snares of wise princes,
 " To draw their easy neighbours to destruction.
 " *Mir.* Thrice, by our law and prophet, has he
 " sworn,
 " By the world's Lord and Maker, lasting peace,
 " With our great master, and his royal friend
 " The Grecian Emperor; as oft, regardless
 " Of plighted faith, with most unkingly baseness,
 " Has ta'en th' advantage of their absent arms,
 " Without a war proclaim'd, or cause pretended,
 " To waste with sword and fire their fruitful fields:
 " Like some accursed fiend, who, 'scap'd from hell,
 " Poisons the balmy air thro' which he flies,
 " He blasts the bearded corn, and loaded branches,
 " The lab'ring hind's best hopes, and marks his way
 " with ruin."

Pr. But see his fate! The mighty Tamerlane
 Comes, like the proxy of inquiring Heav'n,
 To judge, and to redress. [*Flourish of trumpets.*

Enter TAMERLANE, guards, and other attendants.

Tam. Yet, yet a little, and destructive slaughter
 Shall rage around, and mar this beauteous prospect;
 Pass but an hour, which stands betwixt the lives
 Of thousands and eternity, what change
 Shall hasty death make in yon glitt'ring plain,
 Oh, thou fell monster, war! that in a moment
 Lay'st waste the noblest part of the creation,
 The boast and master-piece of the great Maker,
 That wears in vain th' impression of his image,
 Unprivileg'd from thee.

Health to our friends, and to our arms success,
 [To the Prince, Zama, and Mirvan.
 Such as the cause for which we fight deserves!

Pr. Nor can we ask beyond what Heav'n bestows,
 Preventing still our wishes. See, great sir,
 The universal joy your soldiers wear,
 Omen of prosp'rous battle.
 Impatient of the tedious night, in arms
 Watchful they stood, expecting op'ning day;
 And now are hardly by their leaders held
 From darting on the foe. "Like a hot courser,
 "That bounding paws the mould'ring soil, disdain-
 "ing

"The rein that checks him, eager for the race."

Tam. Yes, prince, I mean to give a loose to war.
 This morn Axalla, with my Parthian horse,
 Arrives to join me. He, who, like a storm,
 Swept, with his flying squadrons, all the plain
 Between Angoria's walls and yon tall mountains,
 That seem to reach the clouds; and now he comes,
 Loaden with spoils and conquest, to my aid

[*Flourish of trumpets.*]

Zam. These trumpets speak his presence —

Enter AXALLA, who kneels to TAMERLANE.

Tam. Welcome! thou worthy partner of my laurels,
 Thou brother of my choice, a band more sacred
 Than nature's brittle tie. By holy friendship!
 Glory and Fame stood still for thy arrival;
 My soul seem'd wanting in its better half,
 And languish'd for thy absence; "like a prophet,
 "That waits the inspiration of his god."

Ax. My emperor! My ever royal master!
 To whom my secret soul more lowly bends,
 Than forms of outward worship can express;
 How poorly does your soldier pay this goodness,
 Who wears his every hour of life out for you!
 Yet 'tis his all, and what he has he offers;
 Nor now disdain t' accept the gift he brings.
Enter SELIMA, MONESES, STRATOCLES, Prisoners;
Guards, Mutes, &c. &c.

This earnest of your fortune. See, my lord,
 The noblest prize that ever grac'd my arms!
 Approach, my fair——

Act I

TAMERLANE.

Tam. This is indeed to conquer,
And well to be rewarded for thy conquest;
The bloom of op'ning flow'rs, unsully'd beauty,
Softness, and sweetest innocence she wears,
And looks like Nature in the world's first spring.
But say, Axalla——

Sel. Most renown'd in war, [*Kneeling to Tam.*
Look with compassion on a captive maid,
Tho' born of hostile blood; nor let my birth,
Deriv'd from Bajazet, prevent that mercy,
Which every subject of your fortune finds.
War is the province of ambitious man,
Who tears the miserable world for empire;
Whilst our weak sex, incapable of wrong,
On either side claims privilege of safety.

Tam. [*Raising her.*] Rise, royal maid! the pride
of haughty pow'r
Pays homage, not receives it, from the fair.
Thy angry father fiercely calls me forth,
And urges me unwillingly to arms.
Yet, tho' our frowning battles menace death
And mortal conflict, think not that we hold
Thy innocence and virtue as our foe.
Here, till the fate of Asia is decided,
In safety stay. To-morrow is your own.
Nor grieve for who may conquer, or who lose;
Fortune on either side shall wait thy wishes.

Sel. Where shall my wonder and my praise begin?
From the successful labours of thy arms;
Or from a theme more soft, and full of peace,
Thy mercy and thy gentleness? Oh, Tamerlane!
What can I pay thee for this noble usage,
But grateful praise? So Heav'n itself is paid.
Give peace, ye pow'rs above, peace to mankind;
Nor let my father wage unequal war
Against the force of such united virtues.

Tam. Heav'n hear thy pious wish!—But since our
prospect
Looks darkly on futurity, till fate
Determine for us, let thy beauty's safety

Be my Axalla's care ; in whose glad eyes,
 I read what joy the pleasing service gives him.
 Is there amongst thy other pris'ners aught [To Ax.
 Worthv our knowledge!

Ax. This brave man, my lord, [*Pointing to Mon.*
 With long resistance held the combat doubtful.
 His party, prest with numbers, soon grew faint,
 And would have left their charge an easy prey ;
 Whilst he alone, undaunted at the odds,
 Tho' hopeless to escape, fought well and firmly ;
 Nor yielded, till o'ermatch'd by many hands,
 He seem'd to shame our conquest, whilst he own'd it.

Tam. Thou speak'st him as a soldier should a soldier,

Just to the worth he finds. I would not war [To Mon.
 With aught that wears thy virtuous stamp of greatness.
 Thy habit speaks thee Christian—Nay, yet more,
 My soul seems pleas'd to take acquaintance with thee,

As if ally'd to thine : perhaps 'tis sympathy
 Of honest minds ; like strings wound up in music,
 Where, by one touch, both utter the same harmony.
 Why art thou then a friend to Bajazet ?
 And why my enemy ?

Mon. If human wisdom
 Could point out every action of our lives,
 And say, Let it be thus, in spite of fate
 Or partial fortune, then I had not been
 The wretch I am.

Tam. The brave meet every accident
 With equal minds. Think nobler of thy foes,
 Than to account thy chance in war an evil.

Mon. Far, far from that : I rather hold it grievous
 That I was forc'd ev'n but to seem your enemy ;
 Nor think the baseness of a vanquish'd slave
 Moves me to flatter for precarious life,
 Or ill-bought freedom, when I swear by Heav'n !
 Were I to choose from all mankind a master,
 It should be Tamerlane.

Tam. A noble freedom

Dwells with the brave, unknown to fawning sycophants,

And claims a privilege of being believ'd.

I take thy praise as earnest of thy friendship.

Mon. Still you prevent the homage I should offer.

O, royal sir! let my misfortunes plead,

And wipe away the hostile mark I wore.

I was, when not long since my fortune hail'd me,

Bless'd to my wish, I was the prince Moneses;

Born, and bred up to greatness: witness the blood,

Which thro' successive heroes' veins, ally'd

To our Greek emperors, roll'd down to me,

Feeds the bright flame of glory in my heart.

Tam. Ev'n that, that princely tie should bind thee to me,

If virtue were not more than all alliance.

Mon. I have a sister, oh, severe remembrance!

Our noble house's, nay, her sex's pride;

Nor think my tongue too lavish, if I speak her

Fair as the fame of virtue, and yet chaste

As its cold precepts; wise beyond her sex

And blooming youth; soft as forgiving mercy,

Yet greatly brave, and jealous for her honour:

Such as she was, to say I barely lov'd her,

Is poor to my soul's meaning. From our infancy

There grew a mutual tenderness between us,

Till not long since her vows were kindly plighted

To a young lord, the equal of her birth.

The happy day was fix'd, and now approaching,

When faithless Bajazet (upon whose honour,

In solemn treaty given, the Greeks depended)

With sudden war broke in upon the country,

Secure of peace, and for defence unready.

Tam. Let majesty no more be held divine,

Since kings, who are call'd gods, profane themselves.

Mon. Among the wretches, whom that deluge swept

Away to slavery, myself and sister,

Then passing near the frontiers to the court,

(Which waited for her nuptials) were surpris'd,

And made the captives of the tyrant's pow'r.
 Soon as we reach'd his court, we found our usage
 Beyond what we expected, fair and noble;
 'Twas then the storm of your victorious arms
 Look'd black, and seem'd to threaten, when he prest
 me

(By oft repeating instances) to draw
 My sword for him: but when he found my soul
 Disdain'd his purpose, he more fiercely told me,
 That my Arpasia, my lov'd sister's fate
 Depended on my courage shewn for him.
 I had long learnt to hold myself at nothing;
 But for her sake, to ward the blow from her,
 I bound my service to the man I hated.
 Six days are past, since by the sultan's order,
 I left the pledge of my return behind,
 And went to guard this princess to his camp:
 The rest the brave Axalla's fortune tells you.

Tam. Wisely the tyrant strove to prop his cause,
 By leaguings with thy virtue; but just Heav'n
 Has torn thee from his side, and left him naked
 To the avenging bolt that drives upon him.
 Forget the name of captive, and I wish
 I could as well restore that fair one's freedom,
 Whose loss hangs heavy on thee: yet ere night,
 Perhaps, we may deserve thy friendship nobler;
 Th' approaching storm may cast thy shipwreck'd
 wealth

Back to thy arms: till that be past, since war
 (Tho' in the justest cause) is ever doubtful,
 I will not ask thy sword to aid my victory,
 Lest it should hurt that hostage of thy valour
 Our common foe detains.

Mon. Let Bajazet
 Bend to his yoke repining slaves by force;
 You, sir, have found a nobler way to empire,
 Lord of the willing world.

" *Tam.* Oh, my Axalla!
 " Thou hast a tender soul, apt for compassion,
 " And art thyself a lover and a friend.

" Does not this prince's fortune move thy temper?

" *Ax.* Yes, sir, I mourn the brave Moneses' fate,
" The merit of his virtue hardly match'd
" With disadvent'rous chance: yet, prince, allow me,
" Allow me, from th' experience of a lover,
" To say, one person, whom your story mention'd
" (If he survive) is far beyond you wretched:
" You nam'd the bridegroom of your beauteous sister.

" *Mon.* I did. Oh, most accurs'd!

" *Ax.* Think what he feels,
" Dash'd in the fierceness of his expectation:
" Then, when th' approaching minute of possession
" Had wound imagination to the height,
" Think if he lives!

" *Mon.* He lives, he does: 'tis true
" He lives! But how? To be a dog, and dead,
" Were Paradise to such a state as his:
" He holds down life, as children do a potion,
" With strong reluctance and convulsive strugglings,
" Whilst his misfortunes press him to disgorge it.

Tam. " Spare the remembrance, 'tis an useless grief,
" And adds to the misfortune by repeating.
" The revolution of a day may bring
" Such turns, as Heav'n itself could scarce have pro-

" mis'd,

" Far, far beyond thy wish: let that hope cheer thee."
Haste, my Axalla, to dispose with safety
Thy beauteous charge, and on the foe revenge
The pain which absence gives; thy other care,
Honour and arms, now summon thy attendance.
Now do thy office well, my soul! Remember
Thy cause, the cause of Heav'n and injur'd earth.
O thou Supreme! if thy great spirit warms
My glowing breast, and fires my soul to arms,
Grant that my sword, assisted by thy pow'r,
This day may peace and happiness restore,
That war and lawless rage may vex the world no
more.

[*Exeunt* Tamerlane, Moneses, Stratocles, Prince
of Tanais, Zama, Mirvan, and attendants.]

Ax. The battle calls, and bids me haste to leave thee;

Oh, Selima!—But let destruction wait.
Are there not hours enough for blood and slaughter?
This moment shall be love's, and I will waste it
In soft complainings, for thy sighs and coldness,
For thy forgetful coldness; even at Birza,
When in thy father's court my eyes first own'd thee,
Fairer than light, the joy of their beholding,
Even then thou wert not thus.

Sel. Art not thou chang'd,

Christian Axalla? Art thou still the same?

Those were the gentle hours of peace, and thou

The world's good angel, that didst kindly join

Its mighty masters in harmonious friendship:

But since those joys that once were ours are lost,

Forbear to mention 'em, and talk of war;

Talk of thy conquests and my chains, Axalla.

Ax. Yet I will listen, fair, unkind upbraider!

Yet I will listen to thy charming accents,

Altho' they make me curse my fame and fortune,

My laurel wreaths, and all the glorious trophies,

For which the valiant bleed—Oh, thou unjust one!

Dost thou then envy me this small return

My niggard fate has made for all the mournings,

For all the pains, for all the sleepless nights

That cruel absence brings?

Sel. Away, deceiver!

I will not hear thy soothing. Is it thus

That Christian lovers prove the faith they swear?

Are war and slavery the soft endearments

With which they court the beauties they admire?

'Twas well my heart was cautious of believing

Thy vows, and thy protesting. Know, my con-

queror,

Thy sword has vanquish'd but the half of Selima;

Her soul disdains thy victory.

Ax. Hear, sweet Heav'n!

Hear the fair tyrant, how she wrests love's laws,

As she had vow'd my ruin! What is conquest?

“ What joy have I from that, but to behold thee,
“ To kneel before thee, and with lifted eyes
“ To view thee, as devotion does a saint,
“ With awful, trembling pleasure; then to swear
“ Thou art the queen and mistress of my soul?
“ Has not ev’n Tamerlane (whose word, next
“ Heav’n’s,

“ Makes fate at second-hand) bid thee disclaim
“ Thy fears? And dost thou call thyself a slave;
“ Only to try how far the sad impression
“ Can sink into Axalla?

“ *Sel.* Oh, Axalla!

“ Ought I to hear you?

“ *Ax.* Come back, ye hours,

“ And tell my Selima what she has done!
“ Bring back the time, when to her father’s court
“ I came ambassador of peace from Tamerlane;
“ When, hid by conscious darkness and disguise,
“ I past the dangers of the watchful guards,
“ Bold as the youth who nightly swam the Helles-
“ pont:

“ Then, then she was not sworn the foe of love;
“ When, as my soul confest its flame, and su’d
“ In moving sounds for pity, she frown’d rarely,
“ But, blushing, heard me tell the gentle tale;
“ Nay, ev’n confest, and told me softly, sighing,
“ She thought there was no guilt in love like mine.”

Sel. Young, and unskilful in the world’s false arts,
I suffer’d love to steal upon my softness,
And warm me with a lambent guiltless flame:
Yes, I have heard thee swear a thousand times,
And call the conscious pow’rs of Heav’n to witness
The tend’rest, truest, everlasting passion.
But, oh! ’tis past; and I will charge remembrance
To banish the fond image from my soul.
Since thou art sworn the foe of royal Bajazet,
I have resolv’d to hate thee.

Ax. Is it possible!

Hate is not in thy nature; thy whole frame
Is harmony, without one-jarring atom.

Why dost thou force thy eyes to wear this coldness?
It damps the springs of life. Oh! bid me die,
Much rather bid me die, if it be true
That thou hast sworn to hate me.—

Sel. Let life and death

Wait the decision of the bloody field;
Nor can thy fate, my conqueror, depend
Upon a woman's hate. Yet, since you urge
A power, which once perhaps I had, there is
But one request that I can make with honour.

Ax. Oh, name it! say!—

Sel. Forego your right of war,
And render me this instant to my father.

Ax. Impossible!—The tumult of the battle,
That hastes to join, cuts off all means of commerce
Betwixt the armies.

Sel. Swear then to perform it,
Which way so'er the chance of war determines,
On my first instance.

Ax. By the sacred majesty
Of Heaven, to whom we kneel, I will obey thee;
Yes, I will give thee this severest proof
Of my soul's vow'd devotion; I will part with thee,
(Thou cruel, to command it!) I will part with thee,
As wretches that are doubtful of hereafter
Part with their lives, unwilling, loth and fearful,
And trembling at futurity. But is there nothing,
No small return that honour can afford
For all this waste of love?

“*Sel.* The gifts of captives

“Wear somewhat of constraint; and generous minds

“Disdain to give, where freedom of the choice

“Does but seem wanting.

“*Ax.* What! not one kind look?

Then thou art chang'd indeed. [*Trumpets.*] Hark, I
am summon'd,

And thou wilt send me forth like one unblest'd;
Whom fortune has forsaken, and ill fate

Mark'd for destruction. “Thy surprising coldness

“Hangs on my soul, and weighs my courage down;

" And the first feeble blow I meet shall raze me

" From all remembrance:" nor is life or fame

Worthy my care, since I am lost to thee. [Going.

Sel. Ha! goest thou to the fight?—

Ax. I do——Farewell!——

Sel. What! and no more! A sigh heaves in my breast,

And stops the struggling accents on my tongue,
Else, sure, I should have added something more,
And made our parting softer.

Ax. Give it way.

The niggard honour, that affords not love,
Forbids not pity——

" *Sel.* Fate perhaps has set

" This day, the period of thy life and conquests ;

" And I shall see thee borne at evening back

" A breathless corse.——Oh ! can I think on that,

" And hide my sorrows ;—No—they will have way,

" And all the vital air that life draws in

" Is render'd back in sighs.

" *Ax.* The murm'ring gale revives the drooping flame,

" That at thy coldness languish'd in my breast :

" So breathe the gentle zephyrs on the spring,

" And waken ev'ry plant and od'rous flow'r,

" Which winter frost had blasted, to new life.

" *Sel.* To see thee for this moment, and no more.—

" Oh! help me to resolve against this tenderness,

" That charms my fierce resentment, and presents
" thee

" Not as thou art, mine and my father's foe,

" But as thou wert, when first thy moving accents

" Won me to hear ; when, as I listen'd to thee,

" The happy hours past by us unperceiv'd,

" So was my soul fix'd to the soft enchantment.

" *Ax.* Let me be still the same ; I am, I must be,"

If it were possible my heart could stray,

One look from thee would call it back again,

And fix the wanderer for ever thine.

Sel. Where is my boasted resolution now?

[*Sinking into his arms.*]

Oh, yes! thou art the same; my heart joins with thee,

“ And to betray me will believe thee still:

“ It dances to the sounds that mov’d it first,

“ And owns at once the weakness of my soul.

“ So, when some skilful artist strikes the strings,

“ The magic numbers rouse our sleeping passions,

“ And force us to confess our grief and pleasure.”

Alas! Axalla, say—dost thou not pity

My artless innocence, and easy fondness?

Oh! turn thee from me, or I die with blushing.

Ax. No, let me rather gaze, for ever gaze,
And bless the new-born glories that adorn thee;

“ From every blush, that kindles in thy cheeks,

“ Ten thousand little loves and graces spring

“ To revel in the roses—’t wo’ not be,”

This envious trumpet calls, and tears me from thee—

Sel. My fears increase, and doubly press me now:

I charge thee, if thy sword comes cross my father,

Stop for a moment, and remember me.

Ax. Oh, doubt not but his life shall be my care;
Ev’n dearer than my own——

Sel. Guard that for me too.

Ax. O, Selima! thou hast restor’d my quiet.

The noble ardour of the war, with love

Returning, brightly burns within my breast,

And bids me be secure of all hereafter.

“ So cheers some pious saint a dying sinner

“ (Who trembled at the thought of pains to come)

“ With Heav’n’s forgiveness and the hopes of mercy:

“ At length, the tumult of his soul appeas’d,

“ And every doubt and anxious scruple eas’d,

“ Boldly he proves the dark, uncertain road,

“ The peace, his holy comforter betow’d,

“ Guides, and protects him like a guardian god.”

[*Exit.*]

Sel. In vain all arts a love-sick virgin tries,

Affects to frown, and seem severely wise,

In hopes to cheat the wary lover's eyes.
 If the dear youth her pity strives to move,
 And pleads, with tenderness, the cause of love,
 Nature asserts her empire in her heart,
 And kindly takes the faithful lover's part.
 By love herself, and nature thus betray'd,
 No more she trusts in pride's fantastic aid,
 But bids her eyes confess the yielding maid.

[*Erit Selima, Guards following.*]

ACT II. SCENE I.

TAMERLANE's Camp. *Enter MONESES.*

Moneses. THE dreadful business of the war is over:

And slaughter, that, from yester morn 'till even,
 With giant steps, past striding o'er the field,
 Besmear'd and horrid with the blood of nations,
 Now weary sits among the mangled heaps,
 And slumbers o'er her prey; while from this camp
 The cheerful sounds of victory and Tamerlane
 Beat the high arch of Heav'n. "Deciding fate,
 "That crowns him with the spoils of such a day,
 "Has giv'n it as an earnest of the world
 "That shortly shall be his.

Enter STRATOCLES.

My Stratocles!

Most happily return'd; might I believe
 Thou bring'st me any joy?

Stra. With my best diligence,
 This night I have enquir'd of what concerns you.
 Scarce was the sun, who shone upon the horror
 Of the past day, sunk to the western ocean,
 When, by permission from the prince Axalla,
 I mixt among the tumult of the warriors
 Returning from the battle: here a troop
 Of hardy Parthians, red with honest wounds,
 Confest the conquest they had well deserv'd;
 There a dejected crew of wretched captives,
 "Sore with unprofitable hurts, and groaning
 "Under new bondage," follow'd sadly after

The haughty victor's heels. But that which fully
Crown'd the success of Tamerlane, was Bajazet,
Fall'n like the proud archangel, from the height
Where once (even next to majesty divine)
Enthron'd he sat, down to the vile descent
And lowness of a slave : but oh ! to speak
The rage, the fierceness, and the indignation ?—
It bars all words, and cuts description short.

Mon. Then he is fall'n ! that comet which on high
Portended ruin ; he has spent his blaze,
And shall distract the world with fears no more.
“ Sure it must bode me well ; for oft my soul
“ Has started into tumult at his name,
“ As if my guardian angel took th' alarm,
“ At the approach of somewhat mortal to me.”
But say, my friend, what hear'st thou of Arpasia ?
For there my thoughts, my every care is center'd.

Stra. Tho' on that purpose still I bent my search,
Yet nothing certain could I gain, but this ;
That in the pillage of the Sulian's tent
Some women were made pris'ners, who this morning
Were to be offer'd to the emperor's view :
Their names and qualities, tho' oft enquiring,
I could not learn.

Mon. Then must my soul still labour
Beneath uncertainty and anxious doubt,
The mind's worst state. The tyrant's ruin gives me
But a half ease.

Stra. 'Twas said, not far from hence
The captives were to wait the emperor's passage.

Mon. Haste we to find the place. Oh, my Arpasia !
Shall we not meet ? “ Why hangs my heart thus
heavy,

“ Like death within my bosom ? Oh, 'tis well.
“ The joy of meeting pays the pangs of absence,
“ Else who could bear it ?”

When thy lov'd sight shall bless my eyes again,
Then I will own I ought not to complain,
Since that sweet hour is worth whole years of pain.

[*Exeunt MONESSES and STRATOCLES.*]

SCENE II.

The Inside of a magnificent Tent: Symphony of Warlike Music. Enter TAMERLANE, AXALLA, Prince of TANAIS, ZAMA, MIRVAN, Soldiers, and other attendants.

Ax. From this auspicious day the Parthian name
Shall date its birth of empire, and extend
Ev'n from the dawning east to utmost Thule,
The limits of its sway.

Pr. Nations unknown,
Where yet the Roman eagles never flew,
Shall pay their homage to victorious Tamerlane;
Bend to his valour and superior virtue,
And own, that conquest is not given by chance,
But, bound by fatal and resistless merit,
Waits on his arms.

Tam. It is too much: you dress me
Like an usurper, in the borrow'd attributes
Of injur'd Heaven. Can we call conquest ours?
Shall man, this pigmy, with a giant's pride,
Vaunt of himself, and say, Thus have I done this?
Oh, vain pretence to greatness! Like the moon
We borrow all the brightness which we boast,
Dark in ourselves, and useless. If that hand,
That rules the fate of battles, strike for us,
Crown us with fame, and gild our clay with honour,
'Twere most ungrateful to disown the benefit,
And arrogate a praise which is not ours.

Ax. With such unshaken temper of the soul
To bear the swelling tide of prosp'rous fortune,
Is to deserve that fortune: in adversity
The mind grows tough by buffeting the tempest,
Which, in success dissolving, sinks to ease,
And loses all her firmness.

Tam. Oh, Axalla!
Could I forget I am a man as thou art;
Would not the winter's cold, or summer's heat,
Sickness, or thirst, and hunger, all the train
Of Nature's clamorous appetites, asserting

An equal right in kings and common men,
 Reprove me daily!—No—If I boast of aught,
 Be it to have been Heav'n's happy instrument,
 The means of good to all my fellow-creatures:
 'This is a king's best praise.

Enter OMAR.

Om. Honour and fame [*Bowing to Tamerlane.*
 For ever wait the emperor: may our prophet
 Give him ten thousand thousand days of life,
 And every day like this. The captive sultan,
 Fierce in his bonds, and at his fate repining,
 Attends your sacred will.

Tam. Let him approach.

*Enter BAJAZET, and other Turkish prisoners in chains,
 with a guard of Soldiers.*

When I survey the ruins of this field,
 The wild destruction, which thy fierce ambition
 Has dealt among mankind, (so many widows
 And helpless orphans has thy battle made,
 That half our eastern world this day are mourners)
 Well may I, in behalf of Heav'n and earth,
 Demand from thee atonement for this wrong.

Baj. Make thy demand to those that own thy pow'r,
 Know, I am still beyond it; and tho' Fortune
 (Curse on that changeling deity of fools!)
 Has stript me of the train and pomp of greatness,
 That out-side of a king, yet still my soul,
 Fixt high, and of itself alone dependent,
 Is ever free and royal, and even now,
 As, at the head of battle, does defy thee:
 I know what power the chance of war has giv'n,
 And dare thee to the use on't. This vile speeching,
 This after-game of words, is what most irks me;
 Spare that, and for the rest 'tis equal all—
 Be it as it may.

Tam. Well was it for the world,
 When on their borders neighbouring princes met,
 Frequent in friendly parle, by cool debates
 Preventing wasteful war: such should our meeting
 Have been, hadst thou but held in just regard

The sanctity of leagues so often sworn to.
Canst thou believe thy prophet, or, what's more,
That Pow'r supreme, which made thee and thy prophet,

Will, with impunity, let pass that breach
Of sacred faith given to the royal Greek?

Baj. Thou pedant talker! ha! art thou a king
Possess of sacred pow'r, Heav'n's, darling attribute,
And dost thou prate of leagues, and oaths, and prophets!

I hate the Greek (perdition on his name!)
As I do thee, and would have met you both,
As death does human nature, for destruction.

Tam. Causeless to hate, is not of human kind:
The savage brute, that haunts in woods remote
And desert wilds, tears not the fearful traveller,
If hunger, or some injury, provoke not.

Baj. Can a king want a cause, when empire bids
Go on? What is he born for, but ambition?
It is his hunger, 'tis his call of nature,
The noble appetite which will be satisfy'd,
And, like the food of gods, makes him immortal.

Tam. Henceforth I will not wonder we were foes,
Since souls that differ so by nature, hate
And strong antipathy forbid their union.

Baj. The noble fire that warms me, does indeed
Transcend thy coldness. I am pleas'd we differ,
Nor think alike.

Tam. No—for I think like man.
Thou like a monster, from whose baleful presence
Nature starts back; and tho' she fix'd her stamp
On thy rough mass, and mark'd thee for a man,
Now, conscious of her error, she disclaims thee
As form'd for her destruction.——

'Tis true, I am a king, as thou hast been:
Honour and glory too have been my aim;
But tho' I dare face death, and all the dangers
Which furious war wears in its bloody front,
Yet would I choose to fix my name by peace,
By justice, and by mercy; and to raise

My trophies on the blessings of mankind :
Nor would I buy the empire of the world
With ruin of the people whom I sway,
On forfeit of my honour.

Baj. Prophet, I thank thee.—

Damnation !—Couldst thou rob me of my glory,
To dress up this tame king, this preaching dervise ?
Unfit for war, thou shouldst have lived secure
In lazy peace, and with debating senates
Shar'd a precarious sceptre, sat tamely still,
And let bold factions canton out thy pow'r,
And wrangle for the spoils they robb'd thee of ;
Whilst I (curse on the power that stops my ardour !)
Would, like a tempest rush amidst the nations,
Be greatly terrible, and deal, like Alha,
My angry thunder on the frightened world.

Tam. The world !—'twould be too little for thy
pride :

Thou wouldst scale Heav'n—

Baj. I would :—Away ! my soul

Disdains thy conference.

Tam. Thou vain, rash thing,

That, with gigantic insolence, hast dar'd
To lift thy wretched self above the stars,
And mate with pow'r Almighty : Thou art fall'n !

Baj. 'Tis false ! I am not fall'n from aught I have
been ;

At least my soul resolves to keep her state,
And scorns to take acquaintance with ill fortune.

Tam. Almost beneath my pity art thou fall'n ;
Since, while th' avenging hand of Heav'n is on thee,
And presses to the dust thy swelling soul,
Fool-hardy, with the stronger thou contendest.
To what vast heights had thy tumultuous temper
Been hurry'd, if success had crown'd thy wishes :
Say, what had I to expect, if thou hadst conquer'd ?

Baj. Oh, glorious thought ! By Heav'n I will en-
joy it,

Tho' but in fancy, imagination shall
Make room to entertain the vast idea.

Oh! had I been the master but of yesterday,
The world, the world had felt me; and for thee,
I had us'd thee, as thou art to me—a dog,
The object of my scorn and mortal hatred:
I would have taught thy neck to know my weight,
And mounted from that footstool to my saddle:
Then, when thy daily servile task was done,
I would have cag'd thee, for the scorn of slaves,
'Till thou hadst begg'd to die; and even that mercy
I had deny'd thee. Now thou know'st my mind,
And question me no farther.

Tam. Well dost thou teach me
What justice should exact from thee. Mankind
With one consent, cry out for vengeance on thee:
Loudly they call to cut off this league-breaker,
This wild destroyer, from the face of earth.

Baj. Do it, and rid thy shaken soul at once
Of its worst fear.

Tam. Why slept the thunder
That should have arm'd the idol deity,
And given thee power, ere yester sun was set,
To shake the soul of Tamerlane. Hadst thou an arm
To make thee fear'd, thou shouldst have prov'd it
on me,

Amidst the sweat and blood of yonder field,
When, thro' the tumult of the war I sought thee,
Fenc'd in with nations.

Baj. Curse upon the stars
That fated us to different scenes of slaughter!
Oh! could my sword have met thee!—

Tam. Thou hadst then,
As now, been in my pow'r, and held thy life
Dependent on my gift—Yes, Bajazet,
I bid thee, live.—“So much my soul disdains
“That thou shouldst think I can fear aught but
“Heav'n:”

Nay more; couldst thou forget thy brutal fierceness,
And form thyself to manhood, I would bid thee
Live, and be still a king, that thou mayst learn
What man should be to man, in war remembering

The common tie and brotherhood of kind.
 This royal tent, with such of thy domestics
 As can be found, shall wait upon thy service;
 Nor will I use my fortune to demand
 Hard terms of peace, but such as thou mayst offer
 With honour, I with honour may receive.
[Tam. makes signs to an officer, who unbinds Bajazet.
Baj. Ha! sayst thou—no—our prophet's vengeance
 blast me,

If thou shalt buy my friendship with thy empire.
 Damnation on thee! thou smooth fawning talker!
 Give me agan my chains, that I may curse thee,
 And gratify my rage: or, if thou wilt
 Be a vain fool, and play with thy perdition,
 Remember I'm thy foe, and hate thee deadly.
 Thy folly on thy head!

Tam. Be still my foe.

Great minds, like Heav'n, are pleas'd in doing good,
 Tho' the ungrateful subjects of their favours
 Are barren in return: "thy stubborn pride,
 "That spurns the gentle office of humanity,
 "Shall in my honour own, and thy despite,
 "I have done as I ought." Virtue still does
 With scorn the mercenary world regard,
 Where abject souls do good, and hope reward:
 Above the worthless trophies men can raise,
 She seeks not honours, wealth, nor airy praise,
 But with herself, herself the goddess pays.

*[Exeunt Tamerlane, Axalla, Prince of Tanais,
 Mirvan, Zama, and Attendants.*

Baj. Come, lead me to my dungeon; plunge me
 down

Deep from the hated sight of man and day,
 Where, under covert of the friendly darkness,
 My soul may brood, at leisure, o'er its anguish.

Om. Our royal master would with noble usage,
 Make your misfortunes light: he bids you hope—

Baj. I tell thee, slave, I have shook hands with hope,
 And all my thoughts are rage, despair, and horror.
 Ha! wherefore am I thus!—Perdition seize me!

But my cold blood runs shiv'ring to my heart,
As at some phantom, that in dead of night,
With dreadful action stalks around our beds.
The rage and fiercer passions of my breast
Are lost in new confusion.—

Enter HALY.

Arpasia!—Haly!

Ha. Oh, emperor! for whose hard fate our prophet
And all the heroes of thy sacred race
Are sad in paradise, thy faithful Haly,
The slave of all thy pleasures, in this ruin,
This universal shipwreck of thy fortunes,

Enter ARPASIA.

Has gather'd up this treasure for thy arms :
Nor ev'n the victor, haughty Tamerlane,
(By whose command once more thy slave behold
thee)

Denies this blessing to thee, but, with honour,
Renders thee back thy queen, thy beauteous bride,

Baj. Oh! had her eyes, with pity, seen my sorrows,
Had she the softness of a tender bride,
Heav'n could not have bestow'd a greater blessing,
And love had made amends for loss of empire.
But see, what fury dwells upon her charms!
What lightning flashes from her angry eyes!
With a malignant joy she views my ruin :
Even beauteous in her hatred, still she charms me,
And awes my fierce tumultuous soul to love.

Arp. And dar'st thou hope, thou tyrant! ravisher!
That Heav'n has any joy in store for thee?
Look back upon the sum of thy past life,
Where tyranny, oppression, and injustice,
Perjury, murders, swell the black account ;
Where lost Arpasia's wrongs stand bleeding fresh,
Thy last recorded crime. But Heav'n has found thee ;
At length the tardy vengeance has o'erta'en thee.
My weary soul shall bear a little longer
The pain of life, to call for justice on thee :
That once complete, sink to the peaceful grave,
And lose the memory of my wrongs and thee.

Baj. Thou rail'st! I thank thee for it—Be perverse,
And muster all the woman in thy soul;
Goad me with curses, be a very wife,
That I may fling off this tame love, and hate thee.

Enter MONESES. [*Bajazet starting.*]
Ha! keep thy temper, heart; nor take alarm
At a slave's presence.

Mon. It is Arpasia!—Leave me, thou cold fear.
Sweet as the rosy morn she breaks upon me,
And sorrow, like the night's unwholesome shade.
Gives way before the golden dawn she brings.

Baj. [*Advancing towards him.*] Ha, Christian! Is
it well that we meet thus?

Is this thy faith?

Mon. Why does thy frowning brow
Put on this form of fury? Is it strange
We should meet here companions in misfortune,
The captives in one common chance of war?
Nor shouldst thou wonder that my sword has fail'd
Before the fortune of victorious Tamerlane,
When thou, with nations like the sanded shore,
With half the warring world upon thy side,
Could not stand up against his dreadful battle,
That crush'd thee with its shock. Thy men can
witness,

Those cowards that forsook me in the combat,
My sword was not unactive.

Baj. No—'tis false;
Where is my daughter, thou vile Greek? Thou hast
Betray'd her to the Tartar; or even worse,
Pale with thy fear, didst lose her like a coward;
And like a coward now, would cast the blame
On fortune and ill stars.

Mon. Ha! saidst thou, like a coward;
What sanctity, what majesty divine
Hast thou put on, to guard thee from my rage,
That thus thou dar'st to wrong me?

Baj. Out, thou slave,
And know me for thy lord—

Mon. I tell thee, tyrant,

When in the pride of power thou sat'st on high,
 When like an idol thou wert vainly worshipp'd,
 By prostrate wretches, born with slavish souls;
 Ev'n when thou wert a king, thou wert no more,
 Nor greater than Moneses; born of a race
 Royal and great as thine. What art thou now then?
 The fate of war has set thee with the lowest;
 And captives (like the subjects of the grave)
 Losing distinction, serve one common lord.

Baj. Brav'd by this dog! Now give a loose to rage,
 And curse thyself; curse thy false cheating prophet.
 Ha! yet there's some revenge. Hear me, thou Chris-
 tian!

Thou left'st that sister with me:—Thou impostor!
 Thou boaster of thy honesty! Thou liar!
 But take her to thee back.

Now to explore my prison—If it holds
 Another plague like this, the restless damn'd
 (If Mufties lie not) wander thus in hell;
 From scorching flames to chilling frosts they run,
 Then from their frosts to fires return again,
 And only prove variety of pain.

[*Exeunt Bajazet and Haly.*]

Arp. Stay, Bajazet, I charge thee by my wrongs!
 Stay and unfold a tale of so much horror
 As only fits thy telling.—Oh, Moneses!

“*Mon.* Why dost thou weep? Why this tempe-
 “tuous passion,

“That stops thy falt'ring tongue short on my name?

“Oh, speak! unveil this mystery of sorrow,

“And draw the dismal scene at once to sight.

“*Arp.* Thou art undone, lost, ruin'd, and undone!

“*Mon.* I will not think 'tis so, while I have thee;

“While thus 'tis given to fold thee in my arms:

“For while I sigh upon thy panting bosom,

“The sad remembrance of past woes is lost.

“*Arp.* Forbear to sooth thy soul with flatt'ring
 “thoughts,

“Of evils overpast, and joys to come:

“Our woes are like the genuine shade beneath;

"Where fate cuts off the very hopes of day,
 "And everlasting night and horror reign."

Mon. By all the tenderness and chaste endearments
 Of our past love, I charge thee, my Arpasia,
 To ease my soul of doubts! Give me to know,
 At once, the utmost malice of my fate!

Arp. Take then thy wretched share in all I suffer,
 Still partner of my heart! Scarce hadst thou left
 The sultan's camp, when the imperious tyrant,
 Soft'ning the pride and fierceness of his temper,
 With gentle speech made offer of his love.
 Amaz'd, as at the shock of sudden death,
 I started into tears, and often urg'd
 (Tho' still in vain) the difference of our faiths.
 At last, as flying to the utmost refuge,
 With lifted hands and streaming eyes, I own'd
 The fraud; which when we first were made his
 pris'ners,

"Conscious of my unhappy form, and fearing
 "For thy dear life," I forc'd thee to put on
 Thy borrow'd name of brother, mine of sister;
 Hiding beneath that veil the nearer tie
 Our mutual vows had made before the priest.
 Kindling to rage at hearing of my story,
 Then, be it so, he cry'd: Think'st thou thy vows,
 Giv'n to a slave, shall bar me from thy beauties?
 Then bade the priest pronounce the marriage rites:
 Which he perform'd; whilst, shrieking with despair,
 I call'd, in vain, the pow'rs of Heav'n to aid me.

Mon. Villain! Imperial villain!—Oh, the coward!
 Aw'd by his guilt, tho' back'd by force and power,
 He durst not, to my face, avow his purpose;
 But, in my absence, like a lurking thief,
 Stole on my treasure, and at once undid me.

Arp. Had they not kept me from the means of death,
 Forgetting all the rules of Christian suffering,
 I had done a desp'rate murder on my soul,
 Ere the rude slaves, that waited on his will,
 Had forc'd me to his—

Mon. Stop thee there, Arpasia,

And bar my fancy from the guilty scene!
Let not thought enter, lest the busy mind
Should muster such a train of monstrous images
As would distract me. Oh! I cannot bear it.
Thou lovely hoard of sweets, where all my joys
Were treasur'd up, to have thee rifled thus!
" Thus torn untasted from my eager wishes!"
But I will have thee from him. Tamerlane
(The sovereign judge of equity on earth)
Shall do me justice on this mighty robber,
And render back thy beauties to Moneses.

Arp. And who shall render back my peace, my honour,

The spotless whiteness of my virgin soul?
Ah! no, Moneses—Think not I will ever
Bring a polluted love to thy chaste arms:
I am the tyrant's wife. Oh, fatal title!
And in the sight of all the saints, have sworn,
By honour, womanhood, and blushing shame,
To know no second bride-bed but my grave.

" *Mon.* I swear it must not be, since still my eye
Finds thee as heav'nly white, as angel pure,
As in the earliest hours of life thou wert:
Nor art thou his, but mine; thy first vows mine,
Thy soul is mine——

" *Arp.* O! think not, that the pow'r
Of most persuasive eloquence can make me
Forget I've been another's, been his wife.
Now, by my blushes, by the strong confusion
And anguish of my heart, spare me, Moneses,
Nor urge my trembling virtue to the precipice."
Shortly, oh! very shortly, if my sorrows
Divine aright, and Heav'n be gracious to me,
Death shall dissolve the fatal obligation,

" And give me up to peace, to that blest place
Where the good rest from care and anxious life.

" *Mon.* Oh, teach me, thou fair saint, like thee to
suffer!

" Teach me, with hardy piety, to combat
The present ills; instruct my eyes to pass

" The narrow bounds of life, this land of sorrow,
 " And, with bold hopes, to view the realms beyond
 " Those distant beauties of the future state.
 " Tell me, Arpasia—say, what joys are those
 " That wait to crown the wretch who suffers here?
 " Oh! tell me, and sustain my failing faith.
 " *Arp.* Imagine somewhat exquisitely fine,
 " Which fancy cannot paint, which the pleas'd mind
 " Can barely know, unable to describe it;
 " Imagine 'tis a tract of endless joys
 " Without satiety or interruption;
 " Imagine 'tis to meet, and part no more.

" *Mon.* Grant, gentle Heav'n, that such may be
 " our lot!

" Let us be blest together.—Oh, my soul!
 " Build on that hope, and let it arm thy courage
 " To struggle with the storm that parts us now."

Arp. Yes, my Moneses! now the surges rise,
 The swelling sea breaks in between our barks,
 And drives us to our fate on different rocks.
 Farewell!—My soul lives with thee.—

Mon. Death is parting,
 'Tis the last sad adieu 'twixt soul and body.
 But this is somewhat worse—My joy, my comfort,
 All that was left in life, fleets after thee;
 " My aching sight hangs on thy parting beauties,
 " Thy lovely eyes, all drown'd in floods of sorrow.
 " So sinks the setting sun beneath the waves,
 " And leaves the traveller, in pathless woods,
 " Benighted and forlorn—Thus, with sad eyes,
 " Westward he turns, to mark the light's decay,
 " Till, having lost the last faint glimpse of day,
 " Cheerless, in darkness, he pursues his way."

[*Exeunt Moneses and Arpasia severally.*]

ACT III. SCENE I.

*The Inside of the royal Tent. Enter AXALLA,
 SELIMA, " and Women Attendants.*

Axalla. CAN there be aught in love beyond this
 " proof,

" This wondrous proof, I give thee of my faith?
" To tear thee from my bleeding bosom thus!
" To rend the strings of life, to set thee free,
" And yield thee to a cruel father's power,
" Foe to my hopes! What canst thou pay me back,
" What but thyself, thou angel, for this fondness?
" *Sel.* Thou dost upbraid me, beggar as I am,
" And urge me with my poverty of love.
" Perhaps thou think'st, 'tis nothing for a maid
" To struggle through the niceness of her sex,
" The blushes and the fears, and own she loves.
" 'Thou think'st 'tis nothing for my artless heart
" To own my weakness, and confess thy triumph.

" *Ax.* Oh! yes I own it; my charm'd ears ne'er
" knew

" A sound of so much rapture, so much joy.
" Not voices, instruments, nor warbling birds,
" Not winds, not murin'ing waters join'd in concert,
" Not tuneful nature, not th' according spheres,
" Utter such harmony, as when my Selima,
" With downcast looks and blushes, said—I love.

" *Sel.* And yet thou say'st, I am a niggard to thee:
" I swear the balance shall be held between: us,
" And love be judge, if, after all the tenderness,
" Tears and confusion of my virgin soul,
" Thou shouldst complain of aught, unjust Axalla."

Ax. Why was I ever blest!—Why is remembrance
Rich with a thousand pleasing images
Of past enjoyments, since 'tis but plague to me?
When thou art mine no more, what will it ease me
To think of all the golden minutes past,
To think that thou wert kind, and I was happy?
But like an angel fall'n from bliss, to curse
My present state, and mourn the heav'n I've lost.

Sel. Hope better for us both; nor let thy fears,
Like an unlucky omen, cross my way.

" My father, rough and stormy in his nature,
" To me was always gentle, and, with fondness
" Paternal, ever met me with a blessing.
" Oft, when offence had stirr'd him to such fury,

" That not grave counsellors for wisdom fam'd,
 " Nor hardy captains that had fought his battles,
 " Presum'd to speak; but struck with awful dread,
 " Were hush'd as death; yet has he smil'd on me,
 " Kiss'd me, and bade me utter all my purpose,
 " Till, with my idle prattle, I had sooth'd him,
 " And won him from his anger.

" *Ax.* Oh! I know

" Thou hast a tongue to charm the wildest tempers.
 " Herds would forget to graze, and savage beasts
 " Stand still and lose their fierceness, but to hear
 " thee,

" As if they had reflection, and by reason
 " Forsook a less enjoyment for a greater.
 " But, oh! when I revolve each circumstance,
 " My Christian faith, my service closely bound
 " To Tamerlane, my master, and my friend,
 " Tell me, my charmer, if my fears are vain!
 " Think what remains for me, if the fierce sultan
 " Should doom thy beauties to another's bed!"

Sel. 'Tis a sad thought: but to appease thy doubts,
 Here, in the awful sight of Heav'n, I vow
 No pow'r shall e'er divide me from thy love,
 Ev'n duty shall not force me to be false.

My cruel stars may tear thee from my arms,
 But never from my heart; " and when the maids
 " Shall yearly come with garlands of fresh flow'rs,
 " To mourn with pious office o'er my grave,
 " They shall sit sadly down, and weeping tell
 " How well I lov'd, how much I suffer'd for thee:
 " And while they grieve my fate, shall praise my
 " constancy."

Ax. But see, the sultan comes!—" My beating
 " heart

" Bounds with exulting motion; hope and fear
 " Fight with alternate conquest in my breast.
 " Oh! can I give her from me? Yield her up?
 " Now mourn, thou god of love, since honour tri-
 " umphs,
 " And crowns his cruel altars with thy spoils."

Enter BAJAZET.

Baj. To have a nauseous courtesy forc'd on me,
Spite of my will, by an insulting foe!
Ha! they would break the fierceness of my temper,
And make me supple for their slavish purpose.
Curse on their fawning arts! "From Heav'n itself
"I would not, on such terms, receive a benefit,
"But spurn it back upon the giver's hand."
[*Selima comes forward, and kneels to Bajazet.*]

Sel. My lord! my royal father!

Baj. Ha! what art thou?

What heavenly innocence! that in a form
So known, so lov'd, has left thy paradise,
For joyless prison, for this place of woe!
Art thou my Selima?

Sel. Have you forgot me?

Alas, my piety is then in vain!
Yout Selima, your daughter whom you lov'd,
The fondling once of her dear father's arms,
Is come to claim her share in his misfortunes;
"To wait and tend him with obsequious duty;
"To sit, and weep for every care he feels;"
To help to wear the tedious minutes out,
To soften bondage, and the loss of empire.

Baj. Now, by our prophet, if my wounded mind
Could know a thought of peace, it would be now:
Ev'n from thy prating infancy thou wert
My joy, my little angel; smiling comfort
Came with thee, still to glad me. Now I'm curs'd
Ev'n in thee too. Reproach and infamy
Attend the Christian dog t' whom thou wert trusted.
To see thee here—'twere better see thee dead!

Ax. Thus Tamerlane, to royal Bajazet,
With kingly greeting sends: since with the brave
(The bloody business of the fight once ended)
Stern hate and opposition ought to cease;
Thy queen already to thy arms restor'd,
Receive this second gift, thy beauteous daughter;
And if there be aught farther in thy wish,
Demand with honour, and obtain it freely.

Baj. Bear back thy fulsome greeting to thy master ;
Tell him, I'll none on't. Had he been a god,
All his omnipotence could not restore
My fame diminish'd, loss of sacred honour,
The radiancy of majesty eclips'd :
For aught besides, it is not worth my care ;
The giver and his gifts are both beneath me.

Ax. Enough of war the wounded earth has known ;
“ Weary at length, and wasted with destruction,
“ Sadly she rears her ruin'd head, to shew
“ Her cities humbled, and her countries spoil'd,
“ And to her mighty masters sues for peace.”
Oh, sultan ! by the Pow'r divine I swear,
With joy I would resign the savage trophies
In blood and battle gain'd, could I atone
The fatal breach 'twixt thee and Tamerlane ;
And think a soldier's glory well bestow'd
To buy mankind a peace.

Baj. And what art thou,
That dost presume to mediate 'twixt the rage
Of angry kings ?

Ax. A prince, born of the noblest,
And of a soul that answers to that birth,
That dares not but do well. Thou dost put on
A forc'd forgetfulness, thus not to know me,
A guest so lately to thy court, then meeting
On gentler terms.—

Sel. Could aught efface the merit
Of brave Axalla's name ? yet when your daughter
Shall tell how well, how nobly she was us'd,
How light this gallant prince made all her bondage,
Most sure the royal Bajazet will own
That honour stands indebted to such goodness,
Nor can a monarch's friendship more than pay it.

Baj. Hal know'st thou that, fond girl ?—Go—'tis
not well,
And when thou couldst descend to take a benefit
From a vile Christian, and thy father's foe,
Thou didst an act dishonest to thy race :
Henceforth, unless thou mean'st to cancel all

My share in thee, and write thyself a bastard,
Die, starve, know any evil, any pain,
Rather than taste a mercy from these dogs.

Sel. Alas! Axalla!

Ax. Weep not, lovely maid!

I swear, "one pearly drop from those fair eyes
" Would over-pay the service of my life;"
One sigh from thee has made a large amends
For all thy angry father's frowns and fierceness.

Baj. Oh, my curst fortune!—Am I fall'n thus
low!

Dishonour'd to my face! Thou earth-born thing!
Thou clod! how hast thou dar'd to lift thy eyes
Up to the sacred race of mighty Ottoman,
Whom kings, whom e'en our prophet's holy offspring
At distance have beheld? And what art thou?
What glorious titles blazon out thy birth!
Thou vile obscurity! ha!—say—thou base one.

Ax. Thus challeng'd, virtue, modest as she is,
Stands up to do herself a common justice:
To answer, and assert that inborn merit,
That worth, which conscious to herself she feels.
Were honour to be scann'd by long descent,
From ancestors illustrious, I could vaunt
A lineage of the greatest, and recount
Among my fathers, names of ancient story,
Heroes and god-like patriots, who subdu'd
The world by arms and virtue, and, being Romans,
Scorn'd to be kings; but that be their own praise:
Nor will I borrow merit from the dead,
Myself an undeserver. I could prove
My friendship such, as thou might'st deign t' accept
With honour, when it comes with friendly office,
To render back thy crown, and former greatness;
" And yet e'en this, e'en all is poor, when Selima,
" With matchless worth, weighs down the adverse
" scale."

Baj. To give me back what yesterday took from me,
Would be to give like Heav'n, when having finish'd
This world (the goodly work of his creation)

He bid his favourite man be lord of all.

But this——

Ax. Nor is this gift beyond my pow'r.
Oft has the mighty master of my arms
Urg'd me, with large ambition, to demand
Crowns and dominions from his bounteous pow'r.
'Tis true, I wav'd the proffer, and have held it
The worthier choice to wait upon his virtues,
To be the friend and partner of his wars,
Than to be Asia's lord. Nor wonder then,
If, in the confidence of such a friendship,
I promise boldly for the royal giver,
Thy crown and empire.

Baj. For our daughter thus
Mean'st thou to barter? Ha! I tell thee, Christian,
There is but one, one dowry thou canst give,
And I can ask, worthy my daughter's love.

Ax. Oh! name the mighty ransom; task my pow'r;
Let there be danger, difficulty, death,
T' enhance the price.

Baj. I take thee at thy word.
Bring me the Tartar's head.

Ax. Ha!

Baj. Tamerlane's!
That death, that deadly poison to my glory.

Ax. Prodigious! horrid!

Sel. Lost! for ever lost!

Baj. And couldst thou hope to bribe me with aught
else!

With a vile peace, patch'd up on slavish terms?
With tributary kingship?—No!—To merit

A recompence from me, sate my revenge.

The Tartar is my bane, I cannot bear him:

One heav'n and earth can never hold us both:

Still shall we hate, and with defiance deadly

Keep rage alive, till one be lost for ever:

As if two suns should meet in the meridian,

And strive in fiery combat for the passage.—

Weep'st thou, fond girl? Now as thy king and father,
I charge thee drive this slave from thy remembrance!

Hate shall be pious in thee. Come and join
[*Laying hold on her hand.*]

To curse thy father's foes.

" *Sel.* Undone for ever!

" Now, tyrant duty, art thou yet obey'd?

" There is no more to give thee. Oh, Axalla!

[*Bajazet leads out Selima, she looking back on Ax.*]

" *Ax.* 'Tis what I fear'd; fool that I was t' obey!

" The coward love, that could not bear her frown,

" Has wrought his own undoing. Perhaps e'en now

" The tyrant's rage prevails upon her fears:

" Fiercely he storms; she weeps, and sighs, and
" trembles,

" But swears at length to think on me no more.

" He bade me take her. But, oh, gracious honour!

" Upon what terms? My soul yet shudders at it,

" And stands but half recover'd of her fright.

" The head of Tamerlane! monstrous impiety!

" Bleed, bleed to death, my heart, be virtue's martyr.

" Oh, emperor! I own I ought to give thee

" Some nobler mark, than dying, of my faith.

" Then let the pains I feel my friendship prove,

" 'Tis easier far to die, than cease to love.

[*Exit Axalla.*]

SCENE II.

TAMERLANE's Camp. "*Enter severally MONESES
and Prince of TANAI.*"

" *Mon.* If I not press untimely on his leisure,

" You would much bind a stranger to your service;

" To give me means of audience from the emperor.

" *Pr.* Most willingly; tho' for the present moment

" We must intreat your stay; he holds him private.

" *Mon.* His counsel, I presume?

" *Pr.* No; the affair

" Is not of earth, but Heav'n—A holy man,

" (One whom our prophet's law calls such) a dervise,

" Keeps him in conference.

" *Mon.* Hours of religion,

" Especially of princes, claims a reverence,

" Nor will be interrupted.

“ *Pr.* What his business

“ Imports, we know not ; but with earnest suit,

“ This morn, he begg’d admittance. Our great master

“ (Than whom none bows more lowly to high Heav’n)

“ In reverend regard holds all that bear

“ Relation to religion, and, on notice

“ Of his request, receiv’d him on the instant.

“ *Mon.* We will attend his pleasure. [*Exeunt.*

Enter TAMERLANE and a Dervise.

Tam. Thou bring’st me thy credentials from the
highest,

From Alha, and our prophet. Speak thy message,
It must import the best and noblest ends.

Der. Thus speaks our holy Mahomet, who has
giv’n thee

To reign and conquer : ill dost thou repay

The bounties of his hand, unmindful of

The fountain whence thy streams of greatness flow.

Thou hast forgot high Heav’n, hast beaten down

And trampled on religion’s sanctity.

Tam. Now, as I am a soldier and a king,

(The greatest names of honour) do but make

Thy imputation out, and Tamerlane

Shall do thee ample justice on himself.

So much the sacred name of Heav’n awes me,

Could I suspect my soul of harbouring aught

To its dishonour, I would search it strictly,

And drive th’ offending thought with fury forth.

Der. Yes, thou hast hurt our holy prophet’s honour,

By fostering the pernicious Christian sect :

Those, whom his sword pursu’d, with fell destruction.

Thou tak’st into thy bosom, to thy councils ;

They are thy only friends. The true believers

Mourn to behold thee favour this Axalla.

Tam. I fear me, thou out-go’st the prophet’s order,

And bring’st his venerable name to shelter

A rudeness ill-becoming thee to use,

Or me to suffer. When thou nam’st my friend,

Thou nam’st a man beyond a monk’s discerning,

Virtuous and great, a warrior and a prince.

Der. He is a Christian; there our law condemns him,

Altho' he were ev'n all thou speak'st, and more.

Tam. 'Tis false; no law divine condemns the virtuous,

For differing from the rules your schools devise.

Look round, how Providence bestows alike

Sunshine and rain, to bless the fruitful year,

On different nations, all of diff'rent faiths;

And (tho' by several names and titles worshipp'd)

Heav'n takes the various tribute of their praise;

Since all agree to own, at least to mean,

One best, one greatest, only Lord of all.

"Thus, when he view'd the many forms of nature,

"He found that all was good, and blest the fair va-

"riety."

Der. Most impious and profane!—Nay, frown not, prince!

Full of the prophet, I despise the danger

Thy angry power may threaten. I command thee

To hear, and to obey; since thus says Mahomet:

Why have I made thee dreadful to the nations?

Why have I giv'n thee conquest, but to spread

My sacred law ev'n to the utmost earth,

And make my holy Mecca the world's worship?

Go on, and wheresoe'er thy arms shall prosper,

Plant there the prophet's name; with sword and fire

Drive out all other faiths, and let the world

Confess him only.

Tam. Had he but commanded

My sword to conquer all, to make the world

Know but one Lord, the task were not so hard,

'Twere but to do what has been done already;

And Philip's son, and Cæsar did as much:

But to subdue th' unconquerable mind,

To make one reason have the same effect

Upon all apprehensions; to force this

Or this man, just to think as thou and I do;

Impossible! Unless souls were alike

In all, which differ now like human faces.

Der. Well might the holy cause be carry'd on,
 If Mussulmen did not make war on Mussulmen.
 Why hold'st thou captive a believing monarch?
 Now, as thou hop'st to 'scape the prophet's curse,
 Release the royal Bajazet, and join,
 With force united, to destroy the Christians.

Tam. 'Tis well—I've found the cause that mov'd
 thy zeal.

What shallow politician set thee on,
 In hopes to fright me this way to compliance?

Der. Our prophet only——

Tam. No—thou dost belie him,
 Thou maker of new faiths! that dar'st to build
 Thy fond inventions on religion's name.
 Religion's lustre is, by native innocence,
 Divinely pure, and simple from all arts;
 You daub and dress her like a common mistress,
 The harlot of your fancies; and by adding
 False beauties, which she wants not, make the world
 Suspect her angel's face is foul beneath,
 And wo' not bear all lights. Hence! I have found thee.

Der. I have but one resort. Now aid me, prophet.
[Aside.]

Yet I have somewhat further to unfold;
 Our prophet speaks to thee in thunder—thus——

*[The Dervise draws a conceal'd dagger, and
 offers to stab Tamerlane.]*

Tam. No, villain! Heav'n is watchful o'er its wor-
 shippers, *[Wresting the dagger from him.]*
 And blasts the murderer's purpose. Think, thou
 wretch!

Think on the pains that wait thy crime, and tremble
 When I shall doom thee——

Der. 'Tis but death at last;
 And I will suffer greatly for the cause
 That urg'd me first to the bold deed.

Tam. Oh, impious!
 Enthusiasm thus makes villains martyrs.
[Pausing.] It shall be so—To die! 'twere a reward—
 Now learn the difference 'twixt thy faith and mine:

Thine bids thee lift thy dagger to my throat ;
 Mine can forgive the wrong, and bid thee live.
 Keep thy own wicked secret, and be safe!
 If thou repent'st, I have gain'd one to virtue,
 And am, in that rewarded for my mercy ;
 If thou continu'st still to be the same,
 'Tis punishment enough to be a villain.
 Hence! from my sight—It shocks my soul to think
 That there is such a monster in my kind. [*Ex. Der.*
 Whither will man's impiety extend?
 Oh, gracious Heav'n! dost thou withhold thy thunder,
 When bold assassins take thy name upon 'em,
 And swear they are the champions of thy cause?

Enter MONESES.

Mon. Oh, emperor! before whose awful throne
 Th' afflicted never kneel in vain for justice,
 [*Kneeling to Tam.*

Undone, and ruin'd, blasted in my hopes,
 Here let me fall before your sacred feet,
 And groan out my misfortunes, til your pity,
 (The last support and refuge that is left me)
 Shall raise me from the ground and bid me live.

Tam. Rise, prince, nor let me reckon up the worth,
 And tell how boldly that might bid thee ask,
 Lest I should make a merit of my justice,
 The common debt I owe to thee, to all,
 Ev'n to the meanest of mankind, the charter
 By which I claim my crown, and Heaven's protection.
 Speak, then, as to a king, the sacred name
 Where pow'r is lodg'd, for righteous ends alone.

Mon. One only joy, one blessing, my fond heart
 Had fix'd its wishes on, and that is lost ;
 That sister, for whose safety my sad soul
 Endur'd a thousand fears——

Tam. I well remember,
 When, ere the battle join'd, I saw thee first,
 With grief uncommon to a brother's love,
 Thou told'st a moving tale of her misfortunes,
 Such as bespoke my pity. Is there aught
 Thou canst demand from friendship? Ask, and have it.

Mon. First, oh! let me entreat your royal goodness;
 Forgive the folly of a lover's caution,
 That forg'd a tale of folly to deceive you.
 Said I, she was my sister?—Oh! 'tis false;
 She holds a dearer interest in my soul,
 "Such as the closest ties of blood ne'er knew;
 "An interest, such as power, wealth, and honour
 "Can't buy, but love, love only, can bestow;"
 She was the mistress of my vows, my bride,
 By contract mine: and long ere this the priest
 Had ty'd the knot for ever, had not Bajazet—

Tam. Ha! Bajazet!—If yet his pow'r withholds
 The 'cause of all thy sorrows, all thy fears,
 E'en gratitude for once shall gain upon him,
 Spite of his savage temper, to restore her.
 'This morn a soldier brought a captive beauty,
 Sad, tho' she seem'd, yet of a forin more rare,
 By much the noblest spoil of all the field;
 E'en Scipio, or a victor yet more cold,
 Might have forgot his virtue at her sight.
 Struck with a pleasing wonder, I beheld her,
 Till, by a slave that waited near her person,
 I learn'd she was the captive sultan's wife:
 Strait I forbid my eyes the dangerous joy
 Of gazing long, and sent her to her lord.

Mon. There was Moneses lost. Too sure my heart
 (From the first mention of her wondrous charms)
 Presag'd it could be only my Arpasia.

Tam. Arpasia! didst thou say?

Mon. Yes, my Arpasia.

Tam. Sure I mistake, or fain I would mistake thee;
 I nam'd the queen of Bajazet, his wife.

Mon. His queen! his wife! He brings that holy
 title

To varnish o'er the monstrous wrongs he has done me.

Tam. Alas! I fear me, priuce, thy griefs are just;
 Thou art, indeed, unhappy—

Mon. Can you pity me,
 And not redress? Oh, royal Tamerlane! [*Kneeling.*
 Thou succour of the wretched, reach thy mercy

To save me from the grave, and from oblivion ;
Be gracious to the hopes that wait my youth.

" Oh ! let not sorrow blast me, lest I wither,
" And fall in vile dishonour." Let thy justice

Restore me my Arpasia ; give her back,
Back to my wishes, to my transports give her,
To my fond, restless, bleeding, dying bosom.

Oh ! give her to me yet while I have life
To bless thee for the bounty. Oh, Arpasia !

Tam. Unhappy, royal youth, why dost thou ask
What honour must deny ? Ha ! is she not
His wife, whom he has wedded, whom enjoy'd ?
And wouldst thou have my partial friendship break
That holy knot, which, ty'd once, all mankind
Agree to hold sacred and undissolvable !
The brutal violence would stain my justice,
And brand me with a tyrant's hated name
To late posterity.

Mon. Are then the vows,
The holy vows we register'd in Heav'n,
But common air ?

Tam. Could thy fond love forget
The violation of a first enjoyment ?——
But sorrow has disturb'd and hurt thy mind.

Mon. Perhaps it has, and like an idle madman,
That wanders with a train of hooting boys,
I do a thousand things to shame my reason.
Then let me fly, and bear my follies with me,
Far, far from the world's sight. Honour and fame,
Arms and the glorious war, shall be forgotten ;
No noble sound of greatness, or ambition,
Shall wake my drowsy soul from her dead sleep,
Till the last trump do summon.

Tam. Let thy virtue
Stand up and answer to these warring passions,
That vex thy manly temper. From the moment
When first I saw thee, something wondrous noble
Shone thro' thy form, and won my friendship for thee,
Without the tedious form of long acquaintance ;
Nor will I lose thee poorly for a woman.

Come, droop no more, thou shalt with me pursue
True greatness, till we rise to immortality.
Thou shalt forget these lesser cares, Moneses;
Thou shalt, and help me to reform the world.

Mon. "So the good genius warns his mortal charge
"To fly the evil fate that still pursues him
"Till it have wrought his ruin." Sacred Tamerlane,
Thy words are as the breath of angels to me.
But, oh! too deep the wounding grief is fixt,
For any hand to heal.

Tam. This dull despair
Is the soul's laziness. Rouze to the combat,
And thou art sure to conquer. War shall restore thee;
The sound of arms shall wake thy martial ardour,
And cure this amorous sickness of thy soul,
"Begun by sloth, and nurs'd by too much ease."
"The idle god of love supinely dreams,
"Amidst inglorious shades and purling streams;
"In rosy fetters and fantastic chains,
"He binds deluded maids and simple swains;
"With soft enjoyments woos them to forget
"The hardy toils and labours of the great;
"But if the warlike trumpet's loud alarms
"To virtuous acts excite, and manly arms,
"The coward boy avows his abject fear,
"On silken wings sublime he cuts the air,
"Scar'd at the noble noise and thunder of the war."

—*The boy, fond Love,*
Is nurs'd and bred in sloth, and too much ease;
Near purling streams, in gloomy shades, he lies,
And loosely there, instructs his votaries,
Honour and active virtue to despise:
But if the trumpets echo from afar,
On silken wings sublime he cuts the air,
Scar'd at the noise and clangour of the war. [Exeunt.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

BAJAZET's Tent. Enter HALY, and the Dervise.

Haly. To 'scape with life from an attempt like this,
Demands my wonder justly.

Der. True, it may;

But 'tis a principle of his new faith;
'Tis what his Christian favourites have inspir'd,
Who fondly make a merit of forgiveness,
And give their foes a second opportunity,
If the first blow should miss.—Failing to serve
The sultan to my wish, and e'en despairing
Of further means t' effect his liberty,
A lucky accident retriev'd my hopes.

Ha. The prophet and our master will reward
Thy zeal in their behalf; but speak thy purpose.

Der. Just ent'ring here I met the Tartar general,
Fierce Omar.

Ha. He commands, if I mistake not,
This quarter of the army, and our guards.

Der. The same. By his stern aspect, and the fires
That kindled in his eyes, I guess'd the tumult
Some wrong had rais'd in his tempestuous soul;
A friendship of old date had giv'n me privilege
To ask of his concerns. In short, I learn'd,
That burning for the sultan's beauteous daughter,
He had begg'd her, as a captive of the war,
From Tamerlane; but meeting with denial
Of what he thought his services might claim,
Loudly he storms, and curses the Italian,
As cause of this affront. I join'd his rage,
And added to his injuries, the wrongs
Our prophet daily meets with from Axalla.
But see, he comes. Improve what I shall tell,
And all we wish is ours.

[They seem to talk together aside.]

Enter OMAR.

Om. No—if I forgive it,
Dishonour blast my name! Was it for this
That I directed his first steps to greatness,
Taught him to climb, and made him what he is?
“When our great Cam first bent his eyes towards him,
“(Then petty prince of Parthia) and, by me,
“Persuaded, rais'd him to his daughter's bed,
“Call'd him his son, and successor of the empire;”

Was it for this, that like a rock I stood
 And stemm'd a torrent of our Tartar lords,
 Who scorn'd his upstart sway? When Calibes,
 In bold rebellion, drew e'en half the provinces
 To own his cause, I, like his better angel,
 Stood by his shaking throne, and fix'd it fast;
 And am I now so lost to his remembrance,
 That, when I ask a captive, he shall tell me,
 She is Axalla's right, his Christian minion?

Der. Allow me, valiant Omar, to demand,
 Since injur'd thus, why right you not yourself?
 The prize you ask is in your power.

Om. It is,
 And I will seize it in despite of Tamerlane,
 And that Italian dog,

Ha. What need of force,
 When every thing concurs to meet your wishes?
 Our mighty master would not wish a son
 Nobler than Omar. From a father's hand
 Receive that daughter, which ungrateful Tamerlane
 Has to your worth deny'd.

Om. Now, by my arms,
 It will be great revenge. What will your sultan
 Give to the man that shall restore his liberty,
 His crown, and give him pow'r to wreak his hatred
 Upon his greatest foe?

Ha. All he can ask,
 And far beyond his wish.— [Trumpets.

Om. These trumpets speak
 The emperor's approach; he comes once more
 To offer terms of peace. Retire within.
 I will know farther—he grows deadly to me;
 And curse me, prophet, if I not repay
 His hate with retribution full as mortal. [Exeunt.

SCENE II.

Draws, and discovers ARPASIA lying on a Couch.

SONG.

*To thee, O gentle Sleep, alone
 Is owing all our peace,*

By thee our joys are heighten'd shown,

By thee our sorrows cease.

The nymph whose hand, by fraud or force,

*Some tyrant has possess'd,**

By thee, obtaining a divorce,

In her own choice is bless'd.

Oh, stay! Arpasia bids thee stay;

The sadly weeping fair

Conjures thee, not to lose in day

The object of her care.

To grasp whose pleasing form she sought,

That motion chas'd her sleep;

Thus by ourselves are oft'nest wrought

The griefs, for which we weep.

Arp. Oh, death! thou gentle end of human sorrows,
Still must my weary eye-lids vainly wake

In tedious expectation of thy peace?

Why stand thy thousand thousand doors still open,

To take the wretched in, if stern religion

Guard every passage, and forbid my entrance?—

Lucrece could bleed, and Portia swallow fire,

When urg'd with griefs beyond a mortal sufferance;

But here it must not be. Think then, Arpasia,

Think on the sacred dictates of thy faith,

And let that arm thy virtue to perform.

What Cato's daughter durst not!—Live, Arpasia,

And dare to be unhappy.

Enter TAMERLANE.

Tam. When fortune smiles upon the soldier's arms,

And adds e'en beauty to adorn his conquest,

Yet she ordains the fair should know no fears,

“ No sorrows to pollute their lovely eyes,

“ But should be us'd e'en nobly, as herself,

“ The queen and goddess of the warrior's vows.”—

Such welcome as a camp can give, fair sultanness,

We hope you have receiv'd; it shall be larger,

And better as it may.

Arp. Since I have borne

That miserable mark of fatal greatness,

I have forgot all difference of conditions;

Sceptres and fetters are grown equal to me,
And the best change my fate can bring is death.

Tam. "When sorrow dwells in such an angel form,
"Well may we guess that those above are mourners;
"Virtue is wrong'd, and bleeding innocence
"Suffers some wondrous violation here,
"To make the saints look sad." Oh! teach my power
To cure those ills which you unjustly suffer,
Lest Heav'n should wrest it from my idle hand,
If I look on, and see you weep in vain.

Arp. Not that my soul disdains the generous aid
Thy royal goodness proffers: but, oh, emperor!
It is not in my fate to be made happy;
Nor will I listen to the coz'ner, Hope,
But stand resolv'd to bear the beating storm
That roars around me; safe in this alone,
That I am not immortal.—Tho' 'tis hard,
'Tis wondrous hard, when I remember thee,
(Dear native Greece!) and you, ye weeping maids,
That were companions of my virgin youth!
My noble parents! Oh, the grief of heart,
The pangs, that, for unhappy me, bring down
Their reverend ages to the grave with sorrow.
And yet there is a woe surpassing all:
Ye saints and angels, give me of your constancy,
If you expect I shall endure it long.

Tam. Why is my pity all that I can give
To tears like yours? And yet I fear 'tis all;
Nor dare I ask, what mighty loss you mourn,
Lest honour should forbid to give it back.

Arp. No, Tamerlane, nor did I mean thou shouldst:
But know, (tho' to the weakness of my sex
I yield these tears) my soul is more than man.
Think I am born a Greek, nor doubt my virtue;
"A Greek, from whose fam'd ancestors of old
"Rome drew the patterns of her boasted heroes."
They must be mighty evils that can vanquish
A Spartan courage, and a Christian faith.

Enter BAJAZET.

Baj. To know no thought of rest! to have the mind

Still minist'ring fresh plagues, as in a circle,
Where one dishonour treads upon another ;
What know the fiends beyond it?—Ha ! by hell,
[Seeing Arp. and Tam.]

There wanted only this to make me mad.
Comes he to triumph here ; to rob my love,
And violate the last retreat of happiness ?

Tam. But that I read upon thy frowning brow,
That war yet lives and rages in thy breast ;
Once more (in pity to the suffering world)
I meant to offer peace.—

Baj. And mean'st thou too
To treat it with our empress ; and to barter
The spoils which fortune gave thee for her favours ?

Arp. What would the tyrant ?— [Aside.]

Baj. Seek'st thou thus our friendship ?
Is this the royal usage thou didst boast ?

Tam. The boiling passion that disturbs thy soul,
Spreads clouds around, and makes thy purpose dark—
Unriddle what thy mystic fury aims at.

Baj. Is it a riddle ? Read it there explain'd :
There, in my shame. Now judge me thou, O prophet,
And equal Heav'n, if this demand not rage !
The peasant-hind, begot and born to slavery,
Yet dares assert a husband's sacred right,
And guards his homely couch from violation :
And shall a monarch tamely bear the wrong
Without complaining ?

Tam. If I could have wrong'd thee.
If conscious virtue, and all-judging Heav'n,
Stood not between to bar ungovern'd appetite,
What hinder'd, but in spite of thee, my captive,
I might have us'd a victor's boundless pow'r,
And sated every wish my soul could form !
But to secure thy fears, know, Bajazet,
This is among the things I dare not do.

Baj. By hell, 'tis false ! else wherefore art thou
present ?
What cam'st thou for, but to undo my honour ?
I found thee holding amorous parly with her,

Gazing and glutting on her wanton eyes,
And bargaining for pleasures yet to come :
My life, I know, is the devoted price—
But take it, I am weary of the pain.

Tam. Yet ere thou rashly urge my rage too far,
I warn thee to take heed : I am a man,
And have the frailties common to man's nature ;
The fiery seeds of wrath are in my temper,
And may be blown up to so fierce a blaze,
As wisdom cannot rule. Know, thou hast touch'd me
Ev'n in the nicest, tend'rest part, my honour ;
My honour ! which, like pow'r, disdains being ques-
tioned ;

Thy breath has blasted my fair virtue's fame,
And mark'd me for a villain, and a tyrant.

Arp. And stand I here an idle looker-on,
To see my innocence murder'd and mangled
By barbarous hands, nor can revenge the wrong ?
Art thou a man, and dar'st thou use me thus ? [*To Baj.*
Hast thou not torn me from my native country,
From the dear arms of my lamenting friends,
From my soul's peace, and from my injur'd love ?
Hast thou not ruin'd, blotted me for ever,
And driv'n me to the brink of black despair ?
And is it in thy malice yet to add
A wound more deep, to sully my white name,
My virtue ?——

Baj. Yes, thou hast thy sex's virtues,
Their affectation, pride, ill-nature, noise,
Proneness to change, e'en from the joy that pleas'd
'em :

So gracious is your idol, dear variety,
'That for another love you would forego
An angel's form, to mingle with a devil's ;
“ Through ev'ry state and rank of men you wander,
“ Till e'en your large experience takes in all
“ The different nations of the peopled earth.”

Arp. Why sought'st thou not from thy own im-
pious tribe
A wife like one of these ? “ For such thy race

" (If human nature brings forth such) affords.

" Greece, for chaste virgins fam'd, and pious matrons,

" Teems not with monsters like your Turkish wives,

" Whom guardian eunuchs, haggard and deform'd,

" Whom walls and bars make honest by constraint."

Know, I detest, like hell, the crime thou mention'st :

Not that I fear, or reverence thee, thou tyrant ;

But that my soul, conscious of whence it sprung,

Sits unpolluted in its sacred temple,

And scorns to mingle with a thought so mean.

Tam. Oh, pity ! that a greatness so divine

Should meet a fate so wretched, so unequal.—

Thou, blind and wilful to the good that courts thee,

[*To Bajazet.*

With open-handed bounty Heav'n pursues thee,

And bids thee (undeserving as thou art,

And monstrous in thy crimes) be happy yet ;

Whilst thou, in fury, dost avert the blessing,

And art an evil genius to thyself.

Baj. No—Thou ! thou art my greatest curse on
earth !

Thou, who hast robb'd me of my crown and glory,

And now pursu'st me to the verge of life,

To spoil me of my honour. Thou ! thou hypocrite !

That wear'st a pageant outside shew of virtue,

To cover the hot thoughts that glow within !

Thou rank adulterer !

Tam. Oh, that thou wert

The lord of all those thousands, that lie breathless

On yonder field of blood, that I again

Might hunt thee, in the face of death and danger,

Through the tumultuous battle, and there force thee,

Vanquish'd and sinking underneath my arm,

To own thou hast traduc'd me like a villain.

Baj. Ha ! does it gall thee, Tartar ? By revenge,

It joys me much to find thou feel'st my fury.

Yes, I will echo to thee, thou adulterer !

Thou dost profane the name of king and soldier,

And, like a ruffian bravo, cam'st with force

To violate the holy marriage-bed.

Tam. Wert thou not shelter'd by thy abject state,
The captive of my sword, by my just anger,
My breath, like thunder, should confound thy pride,
And doom thee dead, this instant with a word.

Baj. 'Tis false! my fate's above thee, and thou
dar'st not.

Tam. Ha! dare not! Thou hast rais'd my pond'rous
rage,

And now it falls to crush thee at a blow.

A guard there!—Seize and drag him to his fate!

[*Enter a guard, they seize Bajazet.*]

Tyrant, I'll do a double justice on thee;

At once revenge myself and all mankind.

Baj. Well dost thou, ere thy violence and lust
Invade my bed, thus to begin with murder:
Drown all thy fears in blood, and sin securely.

Tam. Away!

Arp. [*Kneeling.*] Oh, stay! I charge thee, by re-
nown;

By that bright glory thy great soul pursues,

Call back the doom of death!

Tam. Fair injur'd excellence,

Why dost thou kneel, and waste such precious
pray'rs,

“As might even bribe the saints to partial justice,”
For one to goodness lost; who first undid thee,
Who still pursues and aggravates the wrong?

Baj. By Alha! no—I will not wear a life
Bought with such vile dishonour. Death shall free me
At once from infamy, and thee, thou traitress!

Arp. No matter, tho' the whistling winds grow loud,
And the rude tempest roars, 'tis idle rage:
Oh! mark it not; but let thy steady virtue
Be constant to its temper. Save his life,
And save Arpasia from the sport of talkers.
Think, how the busy, meddling world will toss
Thy mighty name about, in scurril mirth;
Shall brand thy vengeance, as a foul design,
And make such monstrous legends of our lives,
As late posterity shall blush in reading.

Tam. Oh, matchless virtue! Yes, I will obey;
Tho' laggard in the race, admiring yet,
I will pursue the shining path thou tread'st.
Sultan, be safe! Reason resumes her empire,

[*The guards release Bajazet.*

And I am cool again.—Here break we off,
Lest farther speech should minister new rage.
Wisely from dangerous passions I retreat,
To keep a conquest which was hard to get:
And, oh! 'tis time I should for flight prepare,
A war more fatal seems to threaten there,
And all my rebel-blood assists the fair:
One moment more, and I too late shall find,
That love's the strongest pow'r that lords it o'er the
mind. [*Exit Tam. followed by the guards.*

Baj. To what new shame, what plague am I reserv'd!
“ Why did my stars refuse me to die warm,
“ While yet my regal state stood unimpeach'd,
“ Nor knew the curse of having one above me?
“ Then too (altho' by force I grasp'd the joy)
“ My love was safe, nor felt the rack of doubt.”
Why hast thou forc'd this nauseous life upon me?
Is it to triumph o'er me?—But I will,
I will be free, I will forget thee all;
The bitter and the sweet, the joy and pain,
Death shall expunge at once, and ease my soul.
Prophet, take notice, I disclaim thy Paradise,
Thy fragrant bow'rs, and everlasting shades;
Thou hast plac'd woman there, and all thy joys are
tainted. [*Exit Bajazet.*

Arp. A little longer yet, be strong, my heart;
A little longer let the busy spirits
Keep on their cheerful round.—It wo' not be!
“ Love, sorrow, and the sting of vile reproach,
“ Succeeding one another in their course,
“ Like drops of eating water on the marble,
“ At length have worn my boasted courage down:
“ I will indulge the woman in my soul,
“ And give a loose to tears and to impatience;”
Death is at last my due, and I will have it.—

And see, the poor Moneses comes, to take
One sad adieu, and then we part for ever.

Enter MONESES.

Mon. Already am I onward of my way.
Thy tuneful voice comes like a hollow sound
At distance to my ears. My eyes grow heavy,
And all the glorious lights of Heav'n look dim;
'Tis the last office they shall ever do me,
To view thee once, and then to close and die.

Arp. Alas! how happy have we been, Moneses!
Ye gentle days, that once were ours, what joys
Did every cheerful morning bring along!
No fears, no jealousies, no angry parents,
That for unequal births, or fortunes frown'd!
But love, that kindly join'd our hearts, to bless us,
Made us a blessing too to all besides.

Mon. Oh, cast not thy remembrance back, Arpasia!
'Tis grief numberable, 'tis distraction!
"But let this last of hours be peaceful sorrow!"
Here let me kneel, and pay my latest vows.
Be witness, all ye saints, thou Heav'n and Nature,
Be witness of my truth, for you have known it!
Be witness, that I never knew a pleasure,
In all the world could offer, like Arpasia!
Be witness, that I liv'd but in Arpasia!
And, oh, be witness, that her loss has kill'd me!

Arp. While thou art speaking, life begins to fail,
And every tender accent chills like death.
Oh! let me haste then, yet, ere day declines
And the long night prevail, once more to tell thee
What, and how dear, Moneses has been to me.
What has he not been?—All the names of love,
Brothers, or fathers, husbands, all are poor:
Moneses is myself; in my fond heart,
E'en in my vital blood, he lives and reigns:
The last dear object of my parting soul
Will be Moneses; the last breath that lingers
Within my panting breast, shall sigh Moneses.

Mon. It is enough! Now to thy rest my soul,
The world and thou have made an end at once.

Arp. Fain would I still detain thee, hold thee still:
Nor honour can forbid, that we together
Should share the poor few minutes that remain.

I swear, methinks this sad society
Has somewhat pleasing in it.—Death's dark shades
Seem, as we journey on, to lose their horror;
At near approach the monsters, form'd by fear,
Are vanish'd all, and leave the prospect clear;
Amidst the gloomy vale, a pleasing scene,
With flow'rs adorn'd, and never fading green,
Inviting stands, to take the wretched in:
No wars, no wrongs, no tyrants, no despair;
Disturb the quiet of a place so fair,
But injur'd lovers find Elysium there. [*Exeunt.*

Enter BAJAZET, OMAK, HALY, and the Dervise.

Baj. Now, by the glorious tomb that shrines our
prophet,

By Mecca's sacred temple, here I swear,
Our daughter is thy bride! and to that gift
Such wealth, such pow'r, such honours will I add,
That monarchs shall with envy view thy state,
And own thou art a demi-god to them.
Thou hast giv'n me what I wish'd, power of revenge,
And when a king rewards, 'tis ample retribution.

Om. Twelve Tartar lords, each potent in his tribe,
Have sworn to own my cause, and draw their thou-
sands,

To-morrow, from the ungrateful Parthian's side:
The day declining, seems to yield to night,
Ere little more than half her course be ended.

In an auspicious hour prepare for flight;
The leaders of the troops thro' which we pass,
Rais'd by my pow'r, devoted to my service,
Shall make our passage secret and secure.

Der. Already, mighty sultan, art thou safe,
Since, by yon passing torches' light, I guess,
To his pavilion Tamerlane retires,
Attended by a train of waiting courtiers.
All who remain within these tents are thine,
And hail thee as their lord.—

Ha! the Italian prince,
With sad Moneses, are not yet gone forth.

Baj. Ha! with our queen and daughter!

Om. They are ours:.

I mark'd the slaves, who waited on Axalla;
They, when the emperor past out, prest on,
And mingled with the croud, nor miss'd their lord:
He is your pris'ner, sir: I go this moment,
To seize, and bring him to receive his doom. [*Exit.*

Baj. Haste, Haly, follow, and secure the Greek:
Him too I wish to keep within my power. [*Exit Haly.*

Der. If my dread lord permit his slave to speak,
I would advise to spare Axalla's life,
Till we are safe beyond the Parthian's pow'r:
Him, as our pledge of safety, may we hold;
And could you gain him to assist your flight,
It might import you much.

Baj. Thou counsell'st well;
And tho' I hate him (for he is a Christian,
And to my mortal enemy devoted),
Yet, to secure my liberty and vengeance,
I wish he now were ours.

Der. And see, they come!
Fortune repents; again she courts your side,
And, with this first fair offering of success,
She woos you to forget her crime of yesterday.

*Enter OMAR, with AXALLA Prisoner, SELIMA
following weeping.*

Ax. I wo' not call thee villain; 'tis a name
Too holy for thy crime: to break thy faith,
And turn a rebel to so good a master.
Is an ingratitude unmatch'd on earth.
The first revolting angel's pride could only
Do more than thou hast done. Thou copy'st well,
And keep'st the black original in view.

Om. Do rage, and vainly call upon thy master
To save his minion. My revenge has caught thee,
And I will make thee curse that fond presumption
That set thee on to rival me in aught.

Baj. Christian, I hold thy fate at my disposal:

One only way remains to mercy open ;
Be partner of my flight and my revenge,
And thou art safe. Thy other choice is death.

Omar. What means the sultan ?

Der. I conjure you, hold——

Your rival is devoted to destruction ; [*Aside to Omar.*
Nor would the sultan now defer his fate,
But for our common safety.—Listen further.

[*Whispers.*

Ax. Then briefly thus. Death is the choice I make ;
Since, next to Heaven, my master and my friend
Has interest in my life, and still shall claim it.

Baj. Then take thy wish—Call in our mutes !

Sel. My father,

If yet you have not sworn to cast me off,
And turn me out to wander in misfortune ;
If yet my voice be gracious in your ears ;
If yet my duty and my love offend not,
Oh, call your sentence back, and save Axalla !

Baj. Rise, Selima ! The slave deserves to die,
Who durst, with sullen pride, refuse my mercy :
Yet, for thy sake, once more I offer life.

Sel. Some angel whisper to my anxious soul,
What I shall do to save him.—“ Oh, Axalla !

“ Is it so easy to thee to forsake me ?

“ Canst thou resolve, with all this cold indifference,

“ Never to see me more ? To leave me here

“ The miserable mourner of thy fate,

“ Condemn'd to waste my widow'd virgin youth,

“ My tedious days and nights, in lonely weeping,

“ And never know the voice of comfort more ?

“ *Ax.* Search not too deep the sorrows of my breast :

“ Thou say'st I am indifferent and cold.

“ Oh ! is it possible my eyes should tell

“ So little of the fighting storm within ?

“ Oh ! turn thee from me, save me from thy beauties !

“ Falsehood and ruin all look lovely there.

“ Oh ! let my lab'ring soul yet struggle thro'——

“ I will—I would resolve to die, and leave thee.

“ *Baj.* Then let him die !—He trifles with my favour.

" I have too long attended his resolves.

" *Sel.* Oh! stay a minute, yet a minute longer;
[*To Bajazet.*

" A minute is a little space in life,

" There is a kind consenting in his eyes,

" And I shall win him to your royal will."

Oh, my Axalla! seem but to consent.—[*To Ax. aside.*

Unkind and cruel, will you then do nothing?

I find I am not worth thy least of cares.

Ax. Oh! labour not to hang dishonour on me!

I could hear sickness, pain, and poverty,

Those mortal evils worse than death, for thee.

But this—It has the force of fate against us,

And cannot be.

Sel. See, see, sir, he relents, [To Bajazet.

Already he inclines to own your cause.

A little longer, and he is all yours.

Baj. Then mark how far a father's fondness yields.

'Till midnight I defer the death he merits,

And give him up 'till then to thy persuasion.

If by that time he meets my will, he lives;

If not, thyself shall own he dies with justice.

Ax. 'Tis but to lengthen life upon the rack.

I am resolv'd already.

Sel. Oh! be still,

Nor rashly urge a ruin on us both;

'Tis but a moment more I have to save thee.

Be kind, auspicious Alha, to my pray'r;

More for my love, than for myself, I fear;

Neglect mankind awhile, and make him all thy care!

[*Exeunt Axalla and Selima.*

Baj. Moneses,—is that dog secur'd?

Om. He is.

Baj. 'Tis well—My soul perceives returning greatness,

As nature feels the spring. Lightly she bounds,

And shakes dishonour, like a burden, from her;

Once more imperial, awful, and herself.

So, when of old, Jove from the Titans fled,

Ammon's rude front his radiant face bely'd,

And all the majesty of Heav'n lay hid.
 At length, by fate, to pow'r divine restor'd,
 His thunder taught the world to know its Lord,
 The God grew terrible again, and was again ador'd.
 [Exeunt.]

ACT V. SCENE I.

BAJAZET's Tent.

ARPASIA.

SURE 'tis a horror, more than darkness brings,
 That sits upon the night! Fate is abroad;
 Some ruling fiend hangs in the dusky air,
 And scatters ruin, death, and wild distraction,
 O'er all the wretched race of man below.
 Not long ago, a troop of ghastly slaves
 Rush'd in, and forc'd Moneses from my sight;
 Death hung so heavy on his drooping spirits,
 That scarcely could he say—Farewell—for ever!
 And yet, methinks, some gentle spirit whispers,
 Thy peace draws near, Arpasia, sigh no more!
 And see, the king of terrors is at hand;
 His minister appears.

Enter BAJAZET and HALY.

Baj. [*Aside to Haly.*] The rest I leave
 To thy dispatch. For, oh! my faithful Haly,
 Another care has taken up thy master.
 Spite of the high-wrought tempest in my soul,
 Spite of the pangs which jealousy has cost me,
 This haughty woman reigns within my breast;
 "In vain I strive to put her from my thoughts,
 "To drive her out with empire and revenge,
 "Still she comes back, like a retiring tide,
 "That ebbs a while, but strait returns again,
 "And swells above the beach."

Haly. Why wears my lord

An anxious thought for what his pow'r commands?
 When, in an happy hour, you shall, ere long,
 Have borne the empress from amidst your foes,
 She must be yours, be only and all yours.

Baj. On that depends my fear. Yes, I must have her ;

I own, I will not, cannot go without her.

“ But such is the condition of our flight,

“ That should she not consent, ’twould hazard all

“ To bear her hence by force. Thus I resolve then,

“ By threats and pray’rs, by every way, to move her.

“ If all prevail not, force is left at last ;

“ And I will set life, empire, on the venture,

“ To keep her mine.”—Be near to wait my will.

[*Exit Haly.*]

When last we parted, ’twas on angry terms ;

Let the remembrance die, or kindly think

That jealous rage is but a hasty flame,

That blazes out, when love too fiercely burns.

Arp. For thee to wrong me, and for me to suffer,

Is the hard lesson that my soul has learnt,

And now I stand prepar’d for all to come :

Nor is it worth my leisure to distinguish

If love or jealousy commit the violence ;

Each have alike been fatal to my peace,

Confirming me a wretch, and thee a tyrant.

Baj. Still to deform thy gentle brow with frowns,

And still to be perverse, it is a manner

Abhorrent from the softness of thy sex :

Women, like summer storms, a while are cloudy,

Burst out in thunder, and impetuous showers ;

But strait, the sun of beauty dawns abroad,

And all the fair horizon is serene.

Arp. Then, to retrieve the honour of my sex,

Here I disclaim that changing and inconstancy :

To thee I will be ever as I am.

Baj. Thou say’st I am a tyrant ; think so still,

And let it warn thy prudence to lay hold

On the good hour of peace, that courts thee now.

Souls, form’d like mine, brook being scorn’d but ill.

Be well advis’d, and profit by my patience ;

It is a short-liv’d virtue.

Arp. Turn thy eyes

Back on the story of my woes, barbarian !

Thou that hast violated all respects
Due to my sex, and honour of my birth.
Thou brutal ravisher! "that hast undone me,
" Ruin'd my love!" Can I have peace with thee?
Impossible! First Heav'n and hell shall join;
'They only differ more.

Baj. I see, 'tis vain
To court thy stubborn temper with endearments.
Resolve, this moment, to return my love,
And be the willing partner of my flight,
Or by the prophet's holy law, thou dy'st.

Arp. And dost thou hope to fright me with the
phantom,
Death? 'Tis the greatest mercy thou canst give;
So frequent are the murders of thy reign,
One day scarce passing by unmark'd with blood,
That children, by long use, have learnt to scorn it.
Know, I disdain to aid thy treach'rous purpose.
And shouldst thou dare to force me, with my cries
I will call Heav'n and earth to my assistance.

Baj. Confusion! dost thou brave me? But my wrath
Shall find a passage to thy swelling heart,
And rack thee worse than all the pains of death.
That Grecian dog, the minion of thy wishes,
Shall be dragg'd forth, and butcher'd in thy sight;
Thou shalt behold him when his pangs are terrible;
Then, when he stares, and gasps, and struggles
strongly,

" Ev'n in the bitterest agony of dying ;"
"Till thou shall rend thy hair, tear out thy eyes,
And curse thy pride ; while I applaud my vengeance.

Arp. Oh, fatal image ! All my pow'rs give way,
And resolution sickens at the thought ;
" A flood of passion rises in my breast,
" And labours fiercely upward to my eyes."
Come, all ye great examples of my sex,
Chaste virgins, tender wives, and pious matrons ;
" Ye holy martyrs, who, with wondrous faith
" And constancy unshaken, have sustain'd
" The rage of cruel men, and fiery persecution,"

Come to my aid, and teach me to defy
 The malice of this fiend! I feel, I feel
 Your sacred spirit arm me to resistance.
 Yes, tyrant, I will stand this shock of fate;
 Will live to triumph o'er thee, for a moment,
 Then die well pleas'd, and follow my Moneses.

Baj. Thou talk'st it well. But talking is thy privilege;

'Tis all the boasted courage of thy sex;
 Tho', for thy soul, thou dar'st not meet the danger.

Arp. By all my hopes of happiness, I dare;—

"My soul is come within her ken of Heav'n;
 "Charm'd with the joys and beauties of that place,
 "Her thoughts and all her cares she fixes there,
 "And 'tis in vain for thee to rage below:
 "Thus stars shine bright, and keep their place above,
 "Tho' ruffling winds deform this lower world."

Baj. This moment is the trial.

Arp. Let it come!

This moment then shall shew I am a Greek,
 And speak my country's courage in my suff'ring.

Baj. Here, mercy, I disclaim thee! Mark me,
 traitress!

My love prepares a victim to thy pride.
 And when it greets thee next, 'twill be in blood.

[*Exit Bajazet.*]

Arp. My heart beats higher, and my nimble spirits
 Ride swiftly thro' their purple channels round.

"'Tis the last blaze of life. Nature revives,
 "Like a dim winking lamp, that flashes brightly
 "With parting light, and straight is dark for ever."

And see, my last of sorrows is at hand;
 Death and Moneses come together to me;
 As if my stars, that had so long been cruel,
 Grew kind at last, and gave me all I wish.

Enter MONESES, guarded by some mutes; others attending with a cup of poison, and a bow-string.

Mon. I charge ye, O ye ministers of fate!
 Be swift to execute your master's will;
 Bear me to my Arpasia; let me tell her,

'The tyrant is grown kind. He bids me go,
And die beneath her feet. "A joy shoots thro'
" My drooping breast; as often when the trumpet
" Has call'd my youthful ardour forth to battle,
" High in my hopes, and ravish'd with the sound,
" I have rush'd eager on amidst the foremost,
" To purchase victory, or glorious death."

Arp. If it be happiness, alas! to die,
To lie forgotten in the silent grave,
To love and glory lost, and from among
The great Creator's works expung'd and blotted,
Then, very shortly, shall we both be happy.

Mon. There is no room for doubt; 'tis certain bliss.
The tyrant's cruel violence, thy loss,
Already seem more light; nor has my soul
One unrepented guilt upon remembrance,
To make me dread the justice of hereafter;
But standing now on the last verge of life,
Boldly I view the vast abyss, eternity,
Eager to plunge, and leave my woes behind me.

Arp. By all the truth of our past loves, I vow,
To die appears a very nothing to me.
"But, oh, Moneses! should I not allow
"Somewhat to love, and to my sex's tenderness?"
This very now I could put off my being
Without a groan; but to behold thee die!——
Nature shrinks in me at the dreadful thought,
Nor can my constancy sustain this blow.

Mon. Since thou art arm'd for all things after death,
Why should the pomp and preparation of it
Be frightful to thy eyes? There's not a pain,
Which age or sickness brings, the least disorder
That vexes any part of this fine frame,
But's full as grievous. All that the mind feels
Is much, much more.—And see, I go to prove it.
*Enter a Mute; he makes signs to the rest, who proffer
a bow-string to Moneses.*

Arp. Think, ere we part!

Mon. Of what?

Arp. Of something soft,

Tender and kind, of something wondrous sad.
Oh, my full soul!

Mon. My tongue is at a loss;
Thoughts crowd so fast, thy name is all I've left,
My kindest, truest, dearest, best Arpasia!

[The Mutes struggle with him.]

Arp. I have a thousand, thousand things to utter,
A thousand more to hear yet. Barbarous villains!
Give me a minute. Speak to me Moneses!

Mon. Speak to thee? 'Tis the business of my life,
'Tis all the use I have for vital air.

Stand off, ye slaves! To tell thee that my heart
Is full of thee; that, even at this dread moment,
My fond eyes gaze with joy and rapture on thee!
Angels, and light itself, are not so fair.

Enter BAJAZET, HALY, and Attendants.

Baj. Ha! wherefore lives this dog? Be quick, ye
slaves!

And rid me of my pain.

Mon. For only death,
And the last night, can shut out my Arpasia.

[The Mutes strangle Moneses.]

Arp. Oh, dismal! 'tis not to be borne! Ye moralists!

Ye talkers! what are all your precepts now?
Patience! Distraction! Blast the tyrant, blast him,
Avenging lightnings! Snatch him hence, ye fiends!
Love! Death! Moneses! "Nature can no more;
"Ruin is on her, and she sinks at once.

[She sinks down.]

"*Baj.* Help, Haly! raise her up, and bear her out.

"*Ha.* Alas! she faints.

"*Arp.* No, tyrant, 'tis in vain.

"Oh! I am now beyond thy cruel pow'r;

"The peaceful slumber of the grave is on me:

"Ev'n all the tedious day of life I've wander'd,

"Bewilder'd with misfortunes:

"At length 'tis night, and I have reach'd my home.

"Forgetting all the toils and troubles past,

“ Weary I’ll lay me down, and sleep, till”——Oh!
[*She dies.*]

Baj. Fly, ye slaves!

And fetch me cordials. No, she shall not die!
Spite of her sullen pride, I’ll hold in life,
And force her to be blest against her will.

Ha. Already ’tis beyond the power of art;
For, see, a deadly cold has froze the blood,
The pliant limbs grow stiff, and lose their use,
And all the animating fire is quench’d:
Ev’n beauty too is dead; an ashy pale
Grows o’er the roses; the red lips have lost
Their fragrant hue, for want of that sweet breath,
That blest ’em with its odours as it past.

Baj. Can it be possible? Can rage and grief,
Can love and indignation be so fierce,
So mortal in a woman’s heart? Confusion!
Is she escap’d then? What is royalty,
If those that are my slaves, and should live for me,
Can die, and bid defiance to my power?

Enter the Dervise.

Der. The valiant Omar sends, to tell thy greatness
The hour of flight is come, and urges haste;
Since he decries, near Tamerlane’s pavilion,
Bright troops of crowding torches, who from thence,
On either hand, stretch far into the night,
And seem to form a shining front of battle.
Behold, ev’n from this place thou may’st discern them.

[*Looking out.*]

Baj. By Alha, yes! they cast a day around ’em,
And the plain seems thick set with stars, as Heav’n.
Ha! or my eyes are false, they move this way;
’Tis certain so. Fly, Haly, to our daughter.

[*Exit Haly.*]

Let some secure the Christian prince Axalla;
We will begone this minute.

Enter OMAR.

Om. Lost! undone!

Baj. What mean’st thou?

Om. All our hopes of flight are lost.

Mirvan and Zama, with the Parthian horse,
Inclose us round, they hold us in a toil.

Baj. Ha! whence this unexpected curse of chance.

Om. Too late I learnt, that early in the night
A slave was suffer'd, by the princess' order,
'To pass the guard. I clove the villain down,
Who yielded to his flight; but that's poor vengeance!
'That fugitive has rais'd the camp upon us,
And unperceiv'd, by favour of the night,
In silence they have march'd to intercept us,

Baj. My daughter! Oh, the trait'ress!

Der. Yet we have

Axalla in our power, and angry Tamerlane
Will buy his fav'rite's life, on any terms.

Om. With those few friends I have, I for a while
Can face their force: if they refuse us peace,
Revenge shall sweeten ruin, "and 'twill joy me,
"To drag my foe down with me, in my fall."

[*Exit Omar.*]

Enter ITALY, with SELIMA weeping.

Baj. See where she comes, with well dissembled
innocence;

With truth and faith so lovely in her face,
As if she durst e'en disavow the falsehood.—
Hop'st thou to make amends with trifling tears,
For my lost crown, and disappointed vengeance!
Ungrateful Selima! thy father's curse!
Bring forth the minion of her foolish heart!
He dies this moment.—

Ha. Would I could not speak
The crime of fatal love! The slave who fled,
By whom we are undone, was that Axalla.

Baj. Ha! say'st thou?

Ha. Hid beneath that vile appearance,
The princess found a means for his escape.

Sel. I am undone! ev'n nature has disclaim'd me!
My father! have I lost you all? My father!

Baj. Talk'st thou of nature, who hast broke her
bands!

Thou art my bane, thou witch! thou infant parricide!

But I will study to be strangely cruel;
I will forget the folly of my fondness;
Drive all the father from my breast; now snatch thee,
Tear thee to pieces, drink thy treacherous blood,
And make thee answer all my great revenge!
Now, now, thou trait'ress! [*Offers to kill her.*]

Sel. Plunge the poignard deep! [*She embraces him.*]
The life my father gave shall hear his summons,
And issue at the wound—"Start not to feel
"My heart's warm blood gush out upon your hands;"
Since from your spring I drew the purple stream,
And I must pay it back, if you demand it.

Baj. Hence, from my thoughts, thou soft relenting
weakness.

Hast thou not given me up a prey? betray'd me!

Sel. Oh, not for worlds! not ev'n for all the joys,
Love, or the prophet's paradise can give!

"Amidst the fears and sorrows of my soul,"
Amidst the thousand pains of anxious tenderness,
I made the gentle, kind Axalla swear,
Your life, your crown, and honour should be safe.

Baj. Away! my soul disdains the vile dependence!
No, let me rather die, die like a king!
Shall I fall down at the proud Tartar's foot,
And say, Have mercy on me? Hark! they come!

[*Shout.*]

Disgrace will overtake my ling'ring hand;
Die then! Thy father's shame, and thine, die with
thee. [*Offers to kill her.*]

Sel. For Heav'n, for pity's sake!

Baj. No more, thou trifler!

[*She catches hold of his arm.*]

Ha! dar'st thou bar my will? Tear off her hold!

Sel. What, not for life? Should I not plead for life?

"When nature teaches even the brute creation,
"To hold fast that, her best, her noblest gift."

Look on my eyes which yon so oft have kiss'd,
And swore they were your best-lov'd queen's, my
mother's;

Behold 'em now streaming for mercy, mercy!

Look on me, and deny me if you can !

“ 'Tis but for life I beg. Is that a boon

“ So hard for me t' obtain, or you to grant ?”

Oh, spare me ! Spare your Selima, father !

Baj. A lazy sloth hangs on my resolution :

It is my Selima !—Ha ! What, my child !

And can I murder her ?—Dreadful imagination !

Again they come ! I leave her to my foes ! [*Shouts.*

And shall they triumph o'er the race of Bajazet !

Die, Selima ! Is that a father's voice ?

Rouse, rouse, my fury ! Yes, she dies the victim

To my lost hopes. Out, out, thou foolish nature !

Seize her, ye slaves ! and strangle her this moment !

[*To the Mutes.*

Sel. Oh, let me die by you ! Behold my breast !

I wo' not shrink ! Oh, save me but from these !

Baj. Dispatch ! [*The Mutes seize her.*

Sel. But for a moment, while I pray

That Heav'n may guard my royal father.

Baj. Dogs !

Sel. That you may only bless me, ere I die.

[*Shouts.*

Baj. Ye tedious villains, then the work is mine.

As Bajazet runs at Selima with his sword, enter TAMERLANE, AXALLA, &c. Axalla gets between Bajazet and Selima, whilst Tamerlane and the rest drive Bajazet and the Mutes off the stage.

Ar. And am I come to save thee ? Oh, my joy !

“ Be this the whitest hour of all my life ;”

This one success is more than all my wars,

The noblest, dearest glory of my sword.

Sel. Alas, Axalla ! Death has been around me ;

My coward soul still trembles at the fright,

And seems but half secure, ev'n in thy arms.

Ar. Retire, my fair, and let me guard thee forth :

Blood and tumultuous slaughter are about us,

“ And danger, in her ugliest forms, is here ;”

Nor will the pleasure of my heart be full,

'Till all my fears are ended in thy safety.

[*Exeunt Axalla and Selima.*

Enter TAMERLANE, the Prince of TANAI, ZAMA, MIRVAN, and Soldiers; with BAJAZET, OMAR, and the Dervise, Prisoners.

Tam. Mercy at length gives up her peaceful sceptre,
And justice sternly takes her turn to govern;
'Tis a rank world, and asks her keenest sword,
To cut up villainy of monstrous growth.
Zama, take care, that with the earliest dawn,
Those traitors meet their fate their treason merits!

[Pointing to Omar and the Dervise.]

For thee, thou tyrant! *[To Baj.]* whose oppressive
violence

Has ruin'd those thou shouldst protect at home;
"Whose wars, whose slaughters, whose assassination,
"(That basest thirst of blood! that sin of cowards!)
"Whose faith, so often giv'n, and always violated,
"Have been th' offence of Heav'n, and plague of earth,"
What punishment is equal to thy crimes?

The doom thy rage design'd for me, be thine:
Clos'd in a cage, like some destructive beast,
I'll have thee borne about, in public view,
A great example of that righteous vengeance
That waits on cruelty, and pride, like thine.

Baj. It is beneath me to decline my fate,
I stand prepar'd to meet thy utinost hate:
Yet think not, I will long thy triumph see:
None want the means, when the soul dares be free.
I'll curse thee with my last, my parting breath,
And keep the courage of my life, in death;
Then boldly venture on that world unknown:
It cannot use me worse than this has done.

[Exit Bajazet guarded.]

Tam. Behold the vain effects of earth-born pride,
That scorn'd Heav'n's laws, and all its pow'r defy'd,
That could the hand, which form'd it first, forget,
And fondly say, I made myself be great!
But justly those above assert their sway,
And teach ev'n kings what homage they should pay,
Who then rule best, when mindful to obey.

[Exeunt omnes.]

EPILOGUE.

TOO well we saw what must have been our fate,
 When harmony with beauty join'd, of late,
 Threaten'd the ruins of our sinking state;
 Till you, from whom our being we receive,
 In pity bid your own creation live;
 With moving sounds you kindly drew the fair,
 And fix'd, once more, that shining circle here:
 The lyre you bring is half Apollo's praise;
 Be ours the task to win and wear his bays.
 Thin houses were before so frequent to us,
 We wanted not a project to undo us;
 We seldom saw your honours, but by chance,
 As some folks meet their friends of Spain and France:
 'Twas verse decay'd, or politics impron'd,
 That had estrang'd you thus from what you lov'd.
 Time was, when busy faces were a jest,
 When wit and pleasure were in most request;
 When cheerful theatres with crowds were grac'd:
 But those good days of poetry are past;
 Now sour reformers, in an empty pit,
 With table-books, as at a lecture, sit,
 To take notes and give evidence 'gainst wit.
 Those who were once our friends, employ'd elsewhere,
 Are busy now in settling peace and war:
 With careful brows at Tom's and Will's they meet,
 And ask who did elections lose or get-----
 Our friend has lost it--Faith, I'm sorry for't,
 He's a good man, and ne'er was for the court;
 He to no government will sue for grace,
 By want of merit safe against a place,
 By spite a patriot made, and sworn t' oppose
 All who are uppermost, as England's foes:
 Let Whig or Tory, any side prevail,
 Still 'tis his constant privilege to rail.
 Another, that the tax and war may cease,
 Talks of the duke of Anjou's right and peace,
 And, from Spain's wise example, is for taking
 A vice-roy of the mighty monarch's making;
 Who should all rights and liberties maintain,
 And English laws by learn'd dragoons explain.
 Come, leave these politics, and follow wit;
 Here, uncontroll'd, you may in judgment sit;
 We'll never differ with a crowded pit:
 We'll take you all, ev'n on your own conditions,
 Think you great men, and wondrous politicians;
 And if you slight the offers which we make you,
 No Brentford princes will for statesmen take you.

THE END.

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